This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

TOWARDS PRETORIA

BUHR A

a39015 01812719 4b

JULIAN·RALPH

1837
ARTES
VERITAS
SCIENTIA
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
TUEBOR
CIRCUMSPICE

D
9.
.R

La Baronne Sirtema
de Grotthuss

With much love
from Mrs Trench [illegible]
hopes that [illegible]
de Grotthuss [illegible]
as [illegible] as she
was in reading this book

La [illegible]

[illegible]

Towards Pretoria

TOWARDS PRETORIA

A RECORD OF THE WAR BETWEEN BRITON AND BOER TO THE HOISTING OF THE BRITISH FLAG AT BLOEMFONTEIN

BY

JULIAN RALPH, 1853 – 1903

Special War Correspondent to the "Daily Mail"

WITH HISTORICAL FOREWORD
APPENDICES AND MAP

LONDON
C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD.
HENRIETTA STREET
1900

Posthumus
Librarian
4-30-1923

Copyrighted in the United States by
Julian Ralph, 1900

[*All rights reserved*]

I have to thank Mr. Alfred Harmsworth for his courtesy in permitting me to reproduce from the "Daily Mail" descriptions, which are here combined with other material to illustrate the British advance "towards Pretoria."

As times goes on, and fresh matter of personal and Imperial interest is gathered from the field of action, further records will be prepared on similar lines, to carry forward and complete the thrilling story of the war in South Africa between Briton and Boer.

JULIAN RALPH.

March, 1900.

423120

CONTENTS

HISTORICAL FOREWORD

PART I.

PAGE

THE DUTCH IN SOUTH AFRICA ix

PART II.

BOER ULTIMATUM AND ARMAMENT xlix

MAP OF THE SEAT OF WAR

TOWARDS PRETORIA

CHAPTER

I. CAPETOWN TRANSFIGURED 57

II. SIR ALFRED MILNER'S TRIALS 64

III. BRAVE OFFICERS AND RICH REFUGEES . . . 71

IV. THE BOER AT HOME 78

V. IDLERS AND MILLIONAIRES 87

VI. CLIMATE AND KAFFIRS 94

VII. NATAL AND LADYSMITH 101

VIII. AT THE BRITISH GENERAL'S HEADQUARTERS . . 121

IX. THE SITUATION AT DE AAR 128

X. HEADQUARTERS DURING A BATTLE . . . 134

XI. BATTLE CONDITIONS ON THE VELDT . . . 142

XII. DUST AND KHAKI 151

XIII. BATTLE OF BELMONT 158

XIV. BOERS IN WAR 164

XV. BATTLE OF GRASPAN 170

XVI. BATTLE OF MODDER RIVER 177

Contents

CHAPTER		PAGE
XVII.	ECHOES OF MODDER RIVER	189
XVIII.	FILLING TOMMY'S WATER-BOTTLE	199
XIX.	BATTLE OF MAAGHERSFONTEIN	207
XX.	THE MESS OF THE WESSEX FUSILIERS	229
XXI.	THE PADRE AND OUR FRIEND THE ENEMY	237
XXII.	CHRISTMAS WITH METHUEN'S ARMY	243
XXIII.	TRAITS OF MODERN BATTLE	252
XXIV.	SCENES AND SOUNDS OF MODERN WAR	261
XXV.	A HALT IN MODERN WAR METHODS	271
XXVI.	CORRESPONDENTS UNDER FIRE	281
XXVII.	AN OPEN LETTER TO A FIELD-CORNET	296
XXVIII.	THE RELIEF OF KIMBERLEY	308
XXIX.	RECORD OF THE SIEGE	316
	SUMMARY OF SUBSEQUENT EVENTS	326

APPENDICES

A. Chief Events of the War 333
B. Decorations and Promotions for Gallantry, etc., at the Seat of War 338
C. The Commands in South Africa . . . 340
D. Tables of British and Boer Ordnance . . . 343
E. Official Table of Casualties 347
F. Glossary of Boer Terms and their English Equivalents, specially prepared by a Johannesburger for this Volume 348
G. The Presidents' Telegram Proposing Peace, and Lord Salisbury's Reply 350
H. The Two Conventions 353
I. Lord Methuen's Report on the Battle of Maagharsfontein 369

INDEX 373

HISTORICAL FOREWORD

PART I

THE DUTCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA, or Africa south of the Zambesi, may be described in a few sentences, so that its physical peculiarities are revealed, and it becomes clear to the mind's eye that it is practically one country by nature, and must eventually be one by government.

A high plateau of rolling, grass-covered land falls away abruptly on each sea-shore, and at the Cape or southernmost end, leaving a more or less swampy, malarial, and generally narrow margin between the tableland and the water. On the Indian Ocean coast lie Natal, and Portuguese East Africa; and on the Atlantic German South-west Africa, and Portuguese West Africa.

Except in Natal there are few white people in these states, and, whatever influence they are yet to exert upon the development of South

Africa, they have not yet begun to form, or even to suggest, their own hereafter.

Of harbours there are, on the west only Cape-town, Saldanha Bay, and Walfish Bay in German Africa—all English ports; and on the east coast Durban in Natal, and Delagoa Bay and Beira in the Portuguese strip.

South Africa displays monotonous sameness in the ever-recurring hills and prairies of the interior plateau. The only variation and relief to the eye is at the doorways, so to speak. All around the coast, walling in the great middle tableland, are mountain ranges rising higher and higher, until they sometimes soar to a height of six thousand feet at sixty miles from the sea, and to more than three thousand feet at half that distance inland.

In these bold ranges are to be found practically the only beauties of scenery which South Africa possesses. Basuto Land, which lies between a part of Natal and the Orange Free State, contains such glorious scenery as to have earned for it the flattering nickname of "the Switzerland of South Africa."

Part of the mountainous country a little farther north, inland from Delagoa Bay, is also spoken of by travellers as very grand and beautiful; and

this is also true of Manica Land, between Portuguese East Africa and Matabeleland, in the British South African Company's domain.

The English and Dutch dominions, which compose the great tableland, are three thousand to five thousand feet above the sea level, so that, in spite of the latitudes in which they lie, they possess a temperate climate. Their soil is very dry, with small rainfalls, and rivers which are either so full as to render them useless for navigation, or, during the major part of the year, nearly dried up.

It is an empire of rolling land, desert in part, grass-grown in the main — an imperial cattle range, only as yet touched here and there for agriculture—one region for one people, or, at least, for uniform laws governing kindred interests.

The little pit at Kimberley on the edge of the Free State, where the diamonds are found, and the several tiny punctures in the Veldt whence the Transvaal gold is taken out, are of gigantic value, but are too small to affect the general rule that South Africa is all alike, a pastoral region needing water before it can be promoted to become a seat of agriculture.

It is a great, dry, almost burnt land, an empire

of solitude and silence. It is said that though there are four million natives in the older colonies, the average traveller rarely sees anything of them, or any hint of them except their trails. As for the white people (of whom there are not a million in all these lands), their homes and villages are so small, and scattered so far apart, that they do not often intrude upon the view of the tourist.

There are but two cities of important size, and half a dozen of some note as capitals or seaports, in that entire half-continent. "A vast solitude with a few oases of population," is what Mr. Bryce calls it; and he explains that this is because of the scanty means for sustaining life, and the few openings for industry unaided by capital, which the country offers.

In considering this newly opened continent it will be less confusing, and in all respects advantageous, to confine the matter to the four better developed and more important dominions; the Cape, and Natal, colonies of England, the Orange Free State, and the South African Republic of the Boers; calling hereafter the larger Boer republic "The Transvaal."

This is in good truth only its nickname, and in reality means "across the Vaal," the river

which divides the two Boer states; but in this case the nickname has a character and fitness of its own, which is not to be found in the country's prosaic name, The South African Republic.

The oldest and largest English settlement, Cape Colony, is more than twice as large as Great Britain, and has a population of seven to the square mile. It contains 382,000 white men, and a million more than that number of natives. Of the white people more than half are of Dutch descent, and the rest are English.

Natal has less than 50,000 white inhabitants, and ten times as many natives. It is only about one-fourteenth the size of Cape Colony, or about twice as large as Wales or Massachusetts, but it is far more varied in soil, climate, and future possibilities than the larger British colony.

The Orange Free State is rather more than a fifth of the size of Cape Colony, and is practically (like all these dominions except Natal) a great pasture land, with but little ground devoted to agriculture; and it boasts but one important town, Bloemfontein, its very prepossessing capital.

The Free State contains about 78,000 white people, and nearly twice as many natives—the dominant race being nearly all of Boer stock.

Historical Foreword

The Transvaal is two-thirds the size of France, but with a population of less than a million, of whom not quite a quarter (245,000) are white people. The Boers are 65,000 strong, and hold in subjection 100,000 British and 80,000 persons of other European races.

In the main the Transvaal is pasture land which yields very poor, rank herbage for cattle, and its hills rise to such mountainous heights that it is subject to severe cold in winter, and fierce heat in summer. It presents nothing to the view which should make any one covet it, and is an almost treeless, wind-bothered, rolling prairie of greatly varying value. Until gold was found under its surface in 1885, the Boers, ever unsystematic, unorganised, and leaving all labour to the blacks, had only succeeded in producing a bankrupt State, which cried out for help when even its black neighbours threatened it.

What it has since become is due to the discovery of gold, a source of wealth and mischief of which the Boers declared that the less it was disturbed the less trouble it would make. Had they enforced this view in law and practice, and left the gold where it lay, or had they forbidden white miners to work in their country, they might have

avoided the tragedy towards which fate has since hurried them. On the contrary, they left their mining resources to be developed by foreigners, by taxing whom as no other people on earth are taxed, they have made themselves temporarily wealthy, with that most precarious of all forms of wealth—the sort that is ill-gotten.

Those German, Hollandish, and Jewish parasites who feed upon the Boers, and who dread the ascendancy of Anglo-Saxon methods, which would put an end to their milking of the Transvaal treasury, have tickled the ears of some sentimentalists in England, by making it appear that the Boers are deserving of all the sympathy and protection due to a heroic handful who, against heavy odds, have succeeded in establishing a government of their own.

A similar secret agency in the United States, deceived the Americans with the argument that the Transvaal is another such country as America was after it had seceded from England, and began to carve out its greatness amid the forests, and against the savages who compassed its sturdy settlers on every hand.

Both these pictures are grotesquely false, and

quite misleading. The one which would make the Boer republic, where industrious and wealth-compelling foreigners are treated with contempt, appear to resemble the American confederation, which has ever offered full and easily gained citizenship to all who applied for it, would be criminal were there any likelihood of its bearing fruit in the form of active American sympathy.

Before we deal with the results of President Kruger's defiant boast that he will "never give anything" to those who have strengthened the Transvaal, and made him a very rich man, let us examine the Boer, and review his history in South Africa.

Out of the conditions of solitude and silence, of small winnings wrung from danger and deprivation, has been produced the Boer—a type unknown, and in many ways unapproached, anywhere else, though a higher, finer, altogether nobler type of recluse was generated in the mountain regions of Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky in the American States a century ago, to send its best descendants to the forefront in that nation, and to leave its weaker ones a disappearing fraction of small importance.

The unique type which Africa has produced

sprang from the lowliest birth in Holland, and has since retrograded beneath its own poor beginning, becoming less enlightened, less cleanly, less gentle, and far less amenable to organisation and discipline.

The Boer thus degraded has lost nothing in courage, it is generally agreed, and has made a distinct advance in self-reliance, strengthening his love of liberty, and license, and independence. The love for loneliness is his strangest trait. That which all other settlers in new lands accept as a hard necessity, but protest against unceasingly, the Boer still seeks, insists upon, and cherishes.

The Dutch made their first South African settlement at the Cape in 1652, and six years later began to bring slaves from other parts, and to press into bondage the natives close around them. All forms of domestic service and industrial labour they put upon these blacks, and thus laid a curse upon South Africa by making it to this day, in all the various States, degrading for a white man to perform manual labour.

To these first settlers there came, thirty-seven years later, three hundred French Huguenots, from among the many who had taken refuge in

Holland after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

These new-comers were men and women of far greater refinement and far higher social status, of education and pride, fresh from participation in the foremost civilising forces of their time. They endeavoured to live by themselves, but this effort was frustrated by the Dutch, who, by both force and adroitness, quickly absorbed them. They forbade them the use of their mother tongue, brought them into the Dutch Church, scattered them among their own Dutch communities, and, in time, by intermarriage with them, gained some of the best traits which now endure in the Boer blood.

On the invitation of the Netherlands Government England seized Cape Colony in 1795, and held it seven years, when it was restored to its original rulers. Five years later, the English, who had learned its value as a naval stronghold, seized it again—this time without being invited to do so—and in 1814 had it ceded to them upon payment of £6,000,000 to the Dutch Stadtholder.

At this time the Dutch numbered twenty-seven thousand, and owned thirty thousand slaves. English immigrants swelled the population, and

with any other people there would have been almost a certainty of a fusion of the two races, but the Boer, restive and disobedient under all rule, is antagonistic as well when his rulers are not of his own blood.

Their highest aim at all times is to be under their own government, and then to feel as free of it as possible, living by themselves, in widely separated households, each dependent upon his own resources, and fancying himself in the especial care of the Almighty, whose inspired book is the only literature he knows. "Ignorant, prejudiced, strongly attached to their old habits, impatient of any control," is how their character is described by the fairest and most careful of all the Englishmen who have studied them and their history.[1]

Having forbidden the use of any language except the Dutch, and having re-enforced this law as soon as they gained nationality anew in the Transvaal, they were greatly incensed that English should be chosen as the tongue to be employed in the Cape Colony law courts, and their documents. More keenly still did they

[1] James Bryce in "Impressions of South Africa."

resent the endeavours of the English to protect the natives against their proverbial cruelty.

It was to be expected that a peasantry which had stagnated for two centuries would not understand or sympathise with the English abhorrence of slavery; and in fact out of this, and the Englishman's determination to protect the natives against Boer cruelty, arose that hatred of the Briton which has waxed stronger in the Boer heart, until to-day the commonest name they give to an Englishman is "rotten egg," and the politest phrase by which they differentiate him from a Boer is "redneck."

They had been refractory, and at times mutinous, under the government of their own people. They remained so under the rule to which their own people handed them over, or sold them. It was in 1834 that Parliament passed an Act freeing all slaves in the British dominions all over the world, and thus added the somewhat weighty straw which broke the back of Boer endurance.

The compensation granted to the slaveholders under the flag was inadequate, and though as much was allotted to South Africa as fell to slave-owners in other colonies, this fact did not serve to mitigate the added grievance to the Boers.

Many writers grant them a greater or less measure of sympathy, but in absolute candour it must be said that this is principally based upon the fact that the English methods of dealing with the black races differed from their own, and to sympathise with them must necessarily be to disparage nineteenth-century principles of justice.

The Boers enslaved the native, and treated him harshly both in slavery, and in their relations with him in his wild state. Their cruelty was spied upon and reported by British missionaries, and punished by the Government; then Boer quarrels and conflicts with the natives gained for the blacks the protection of the English, and finally their slaves were set free, in common with all slaves held under the British flag.

Upon these statements both sides agree, and it seems that the only sympathy we can feel for the Boers is that which they continue to deserve—that which belongs to men of seventeenth-century ways, who find themselves three centuries behind the ideas and influences which hedge them round.

Had the Boers been people of noble nature, of fine instincts, kindly, and with high and broad aspirations, had they redeemed, or even made an effort to redeem, a great wilderness, and put it in

the path along which the progressive nations of the globe were tending; had they shown due regard for education, religious liberty, and the dignity of white labour; had they sought to produce and to manufacture what even their simple needs demanded, and to render themselves self-supporting, very different would be the judgment of the world, nor would its verdict be the death-sentence which now seems most likely to be passed upon them.

Had they, with all their uncouthness, been men of high resolve and broad capacity, the feelings which some seek to rouse in us on their behalf would be stirred in every fair man's heart. But this is so far from the case that all the weight of their "secret fund" has not been able to create the belief that they are a virtuous handful, struggling to create a government based on lofty ideals; has not been able to raise a single nation to speak or move upon their behalf.

The effort to compare them with the Founders of the North American Republic is to belittle the intelligence of every American who has informed himself upon the Boers' history. The petty, squalid record of the Boer leaders no more matches the heroic course of the American

patriots, than the life of Stephen John Paul Kruger parallels that of George Washington. Indeed, whoever would spare himself all greater trouble, and still reach the same just result, can simply contrast the portraits of the two Fathers of their Countries, and feel secure in what conclusion he may draw from this comparison.

Disgusted by the freeing of their slaves, the Boers made what they call the "Great Trek" in 1836 into a new territory, which offered them an opportunity to lead the solitary, almost nomad lives which to-day they still relish as the very consummation of desire.

The imperial spirit in full measure was not then upon Great Britain, nor did her rulers show that pride and foresight which defeated secession in the American States twenty-nine years later. They allowed the Boers to go, and, like the constable of Shakespeare's creation, "thanked God they were rid of a villain."

And so it came to pass that in the course of two years about ten thousand Boers made the journey northward and eastward in their waggons, each head of a family carrying his bible and his gun, and—so short is this nation's history, and so quickly do events march—among them strode a lad

who has come to be the President of this day, and who, on that long trek, may have had riveted upon his mind the extraordinary conviction, or hallucination, which, at the end of sixty years, was to lead him to defy progress, justice, and the principles of liberty, fraternity, and equality, while boasting that he would "never give anything" to the majority of people under his rule.

In the belief that they had freed themselves from the domination of foreigners, they began to establish their present republics upon the elevated plateau of the interior. Hardship, tragedy, wars with the natives, and all the vicisitudes of life in an unbroken country inhabited by savages, attended them, but they clung sturdily to their purpose.

At nearly the same time a large and better organised band of Boers, led by Pieter Retief, marched into what is now Natal, and all that resulted there did not by any means serve to allay the hatred of the Boer for the Briton. Durban (then Port Natal) had already been formed by the English, but the Government refused to establish its rule over the new territory.

This proved to be one of many instances of

unwise action on the part of the Colonial Office, at the time when Great Britain fancied that she needed no more colonies, and that those which she already possessed should be left to struggle for themselves.

When the Boers began to pour into Natal in 1838, a garrison was sent by the Cape Government to the little east coast port, but the Crown refused to annex the region, and the garrison was recalled.

Shortly after this they made war upon the Zulus in Natal, established their own city of Pietermaritzburg, and began to parcel out the land. At once, the British sent troops there to assert English sovereignty, and the Boer forces dispersed. Only five hundred remained in the new Colony; the others crossed the mountains and joined their compatriots in the two republics.

Thus an end was put to a third Boer republic, which existed only six years.

The participants in the "Great Trek" were now about fifteen thousand strong, and were attempting to govern a territory seven hundred miles long and three hundred miles wide. Great Britain had never ceased to regard them as her subjects, and still declared them such, yet did nothing to

interfere with their course, or with the governments they set up.

At first the Boers bound themselves by slender ties into many little republican communities, each of which had a volksraad or people's council. This was more especially the case in what is now the Transvaal. The Boers on the southern side of the Vaal River, where now is the Orange Free State, had no government, and did not recognise any of the little governments of the Transvaal.

They were at last roused into nationalisation by a sudden movement of Great Britain, which, in pursuance of a plan for ensuring peace near the borders of its colonies, annexed the land between the northern border of Cape Colony and the Vaal River, and called it the Orange River Sovereignty. The handful of unorganised Boers rose in arms, and with the help of armed men from the Transvaal country, commanded by Andries Pretorius, they captured Bloemfontein from the British resident. They were as readily repulsed, however, by troops under Sir Harry Smith, and again their country became an English colony.

Peace was not yet produced. War broke out between a negro tribe and the British authorities

in the Orange River Sovereignty. Pretorius threatened to assist the Kaffirs, and, at the same time, the Cape colonists were at war with natives on the coast. At this juncture Pretorius offered to come to definite terms with Great Britain, and there followed the Sand River Convention of 1852.

At that Convention it was agreed that Great Britain "guaranteed to the emigrant farmers beyond the Vaal River the right to manage their own affairs, and to govern themselves according to their own laws, without any interference on the part of the British Government;" the Boers, in return, promising to make no alliance with any of the natives north of the Vaal River, and to permit no slavery in their country.

This Convention gave birth to the Transvaal or South African Republic, which was thereafter slowly formed out of the little governments which had existed there. Accepting this, then, as the basis of the relation between the British and the Transvaal Boers, we see that Great Britain assumed the right to impose conditions, upon which she granted what rights the Boers held, and this British overlordship was acknowledged by them without protest.

A lukewarm interest in all her colonies,

amounting to a willingness to rid herself of any that occasioned trouble or expense, still marked England's policy. Her forces in the Orange River Sovereignty met with reverses at the hands of the natives, and when these foes at last expressed a desire for peace the Government decided to withdraw from the colony altogether.

The Orange River settlers were to a great extent British and pro-British, and many of them appealed to England to reconsider her policy. No attention was paid to them, and at a Convention at Bloemfontein in 1854 the British guaranteed the future independence of the country and its government, forbade the holding of slaves there, and, as in the case of the Transvaal, offered to the new people the right to buy areas in the British colony, according liberal concessions in the matter of import duties as well.

To the Orange Free State Great Britain gave a more positive declaration of independence than had been given to the Transvaal; and the Free State people, a far more orderly and reasonable community than the Transvaal Boers, long remained in unbroken peace with their English neighbours, in spite of an untoward occurrence of great moment which happened in 1869.

The Dutch in South Africa

The discovery of diamonds at Kimberley led to counter claims for the territory in which they were found. The Free State claimed it, assertions of ownership were also made by the Transvaal, a native chief, and a Griqua half-breed named Waterboer. The arbitrator agreed upon by all except the Orange Free State was the Governor of Natal, who, by reason of the mismanagement of the cases for the other parties, decided in favour of Waterboer. Waterboer put himself under British protection, and the Government created a new colony with the territory, and called it Griqualand. This is now a part of Cape Colony.

Later still, on fresh appeal, an English court decided that Waterboer had no rights in the case. The Orange Free State, which had by far the best case, did not relinquish its claim, but accepted £90,000 in satisfaction, and thus the incident was closed without friction or lasting discontent.

In proof that the Boers of the Free State were superior to their neighbours in the Transvaal, James Bryce speaks of the Transvaal Dutch as more rude and uneducated than those of the Free State, with no admixture of English blood,

and unaffected by intercourse with the more civilised people of Cape Colony.

Their love of independence was accentuated by a tendency to discord. Their warlike spirit had produced a readiness to take up arms on slight occasion, and had degenerated into a fondness for predatory expeditions. They were constantly endeavouring to extend their borders to the north, and one party among them even attempted the capture of the Free State. Then came the Sand River Convention of 1852, already mentioned, and by 1860 their little governments had united upon the basis of a common constitution called the "Groudwet," or fundamental law.

Even after this they kept up frequent and savage wars with the natives, which were attended by fearful massacres on one side and savage retaliation on the other. They subjected still other natives to an enforced bondage hard to distinguish from slavery. They would pay no taxes, resorted to primitive modes of barter because of an almost general absence of money, and neither realised the capabilities of, nor benefited by, the makeshift they called a government.

The treasury soon became empty, and practi-

cally every Boer made his own pleasure his law. During this condition of their affairs they engaged in a disastrous war with a Kaffir chief, and were threatened with attack by the powerful Zulus. A British commissioner was sent to inquire into the condition of affairs there, and reported that a majority of the people desired annexation to Great Britain.

There were remonstrances and counter petitions, and the critics are at odds as to the justice of the British action, but what is undeniable is that the Boers submitted quietly to the change, and offered no resistance until order had been produced out of the confusion into which they had fallen. Thus, in 1877, the Transvaal was annexed to Great Britain.

Had the attention of the Government not been distracted by weightier affairs in Europe, the blunders which marked its subsequent dealings with this new colony could not have been made, and South Africa would have been thus early liberated from the heritage of discord, disloyalty, and narrow peasant leadership with which nearly all its political parts had been cursed. However, the new English rulers missed their chance, and eventually magnified these evils.

As we have since found to our cost, they delayed the establishment of self-government which had been promised to their new subjects, and appointed a governor wholly unfitted for so delicate a task. They then removed the two prime causes that led the Boers to acquiesce in the change of rulership—they established a wise plan of government, restored order, and destroyed the power of those native tribes which had threatened the Boers with annihilation.

Freed from their enemies, and disappointed in their new guardians, the Transvaal Boers revolted, and attacked the British troops, with the result that the battles of Laing's Neck and Majuba Hill were recorded in the pages of history, and were fated to grow from the smallest of encounters to the most tremendous memories in the minds of both victors and vanquished.

The British at that eventful period were wholly unprepared to fight, and the Boers were equally unable to match them if they had been ready; but the Dutchmen won, and straightway fancied themselves in God's keeping, and unconquerable. The British, on the other hand, magnified their own defeat in the light of what

their soldiers could have done had not their reinforcements been called off.

At the time that the Boers revolted the only British troops were small scattered detachments. After their defeats they gathered a force which must have quickly and for ever ended Boer mischief and misrule in Africa; but the home Government, under Gladstone, ordered an armistice, and made a new treaty, March, 1881,[1] with the Boers, granting them self-government under British suzerainty. This was formally ratified in the following autumn.

The Transvaal thus entered upon a new phase, and became a quasi-independent State under British sovereignty, subject to British control in matters of foreign policy, to the passage of British troops through it in time of war, and to the giving of guarantees for the protection of the natives. It is worth noting, as it will be to the end of the chapter, that Great Britain did not vacate the paternal relation to these people and their State which it had declared at the outset, when the "Great Trek," or secession of the Boers, took place forty-five years before.

The home Government resisted the inclination

[1] See Appendix.

to punish the Boers for their assaults upon its troops, because it was predicted that a racial war would break out all over South Africa if the Transvaal should be invaded. And yet we now see that this very magnanimity produced the conditions for such a war, or rather, for the destruction of British rule on that half continent, unless a subsequent resort to arms should restore unquestioned British supremacy.

The petty victories at Laing's Neck and Majuba Hill so inflamed the vanity of the Boers, that in both the Dutch States and in the English colonies they ever afterwards boasted that one Boer was equal to ten or twenty English soldiers.

Thus infatuated, and rendered more than ever ambitious by the sudden enrichment of the Transvaal consequent upon the discovery of gold, and nursing an idle dream of one day conquering all South Africa, they treasured a project, based upon conspiracy and violence, for ending British rule upon that soil.

Their plan in its conception offered nothing to the world at large, but was wholly selfish, and unjust to all others concerned. Since it stood for organised opposition to the progress of Christendom, it became evident that the British must

embrace the next opportunity to assert themselves, and must do so with a blow more certainly decisive than Sir Evelyn Wood could have struck had he been allowed to advance his force in 1881.

After Majuba Hill the issue was not merely to be the continuance or finish of Boer independence; upon it hung the preservation or the loss of all her South African colonies to Great Britain!

Unlike any other considerable body of colonists or emigrants of European stock of whom we possess knowledge, these Boers had markedly retrograded. During the lifetime of a generation they had been cut off from the world, and, to a surprising extent, even from companionship with one another. They had existed without books, without contact with any of the intellectual or progressive influences that move mankind, without schools, almost without money—a community of isolated families, each living wholly apart, and for itself.

Perhaps in the establishment of churches they appeared to show progress, but it was merely in appearance, for these were in constant strife with one another. On the other hand, in individual valour, in love of independence, and a degree of liberty which trespassed upon licence, and in their

eagerness to combine against a foe, they were believed to have lost nothing.

It is claimed that from the day of the restoration of their country to the Boers they exhibited a very slight regard for their treaty obligations. Certainly they compelled the British to oppose their aims. They sought to extend their borders in three directions and, above all, to reach the sea. They planned the occupation of Mashonaland; they entered Zululand and added three thousand square miles of it to their republic; and they invaded Bechuanaland and established there two petty governments which Great Britain caused them to abandon.

During all this time they tried to secure a greater measure of independence, getting it in 1884 by means of a new treaty. This bound them to make no alliance with any other Power, foreign or native, excepting the Free State, and to forbid slavery in their republic. It gave them a "most favoured nation" clause, with provisions for the good treatment of foreigners living and trading in the Transvaal.[1]

As this new treaty did not actually repeat

[1] At a meeting out of which grew the new Convention of 1884, the following conversation occurred between Sir

the British declaration of suzerainty, the Boers declared it to be abandoned. The British reply to this is that the Convention of 1881, which asserts their suzerainty, is not affected by the changes of 1884,[1] which were made only in some of the articles which follow that declaration.

The Convention of 1884 is explicit as to its limitations. It declares that "her Majesty has been pleased to direct, and it is hereby declared, that the following articles of a new Convention . . . shall, when ratified by the Volksraad of the South African Republic, *be substituted for the*

Hercules Robinson and Sir Evelyn Wood for the Crown, and Mr. Kruger for the Boers :—

Sir H. Robinson : Before annexation, had British subjects complete freedom of trade throughout ? Were they on the same footing as citizens of the Transvaal ?

Mr. Kruger : They were on the same footing as the burghers. There was not the slightest difference, in accordance with the Sand River Convention.

Sir H. Robinson : I trust you will not object to that continuing.

Mr. Kruger : No ; there will be equal protection for anybody.

Sir Evelyn Wood : And equal privileges ?

Mr. Kruger : We make no difference as far as burgher rights are concerned. There may, perhaps, be some slight difference in the case of a young person who has just come into the country.

[1] See Appendix.

articles embodied in the Convention of August 3, 1881."

The contention of the Boers, therefore, is a mere quibble. They did not ask for the abandonment of the British right of suzerainty, and the subject was not mentioned in the meeting at which the Boers obtained the changes for which they asked. Moreover, the practical application of the suzerainty, as shown in the command that the Transvaal make no treaties with foreign Powers except through her Majesty's diplomatic and consular officers abroad, is renewed in Article 4 of the new Convention.

Dr. Theal says, in his short history of South Africa, that at about this time the Boers held themselves to be treated by England in a manner both unfriendly and unjust. The delay in the transferring of Swaziland to the Transvaal, and the final bottling up of the republic by the British annexation of the land between Natal and the Portuguese possessions, were the chief acts of which the Boers complained.

Re-established as a nation, a material change in their condition came with the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand (white water's ridge) about 1885.

The Dutch in South Africa

With the sudden inrush of new settlers of European birth, and the enrichment of the little republic by its taxes upon the new industry, have arisen the grievances of the Uitlanders, the project of rebellion on their part, the bungling raid by Jameson, and, finally, the effort of the British Government to assert that suzerainty, or overlordship, which it declares it has never surrendered.

These very recent events are so fresh in the memory of the world that there is no need to retell their story here. What is more to the point is to state precisely the extent and nature of the complaints which the Uitlanders have lodged at the court of universal public opinion, against President Kruger and his supporters.

Since the Boers often drag in the great American Republic for purposes of comparison, it may be of interest to say that the case of the Uitlanders in the Transvaal in 1899, and that of the colonists in America in 1776, are in truth very much alike, and, "no taxation without representation," once the cry of the misgoverned Transatlantic emigrants, is now the watchword of the Uitlanders.

The revenue of the Transvaal has grown to more than £4,000,000 from £178,000 in 1885, and this has been wholly due to the energy and

industry of the Uitlanders. They number three-quarters of the white population, and yet are governed by a parliament elected by one-quarter —a body, moreover, which is controlled by a government that is pledged to withdraw their rights from them. As M. Rouliot, a Frenchman, who is President of the Chamber of Mines at Johannesburg, has declared, "we are the most heavily taxed community in the world though we are the one that has least voice in the use of the funds it contributes."

Furthermore, as Mr. Spencer Wilkinson summarises the situation in his digest of history called "British Policy in South Africa," the Boer Government has broken its pledge to accord equal treatment to foreign settlers, by determinedly withdrawing the right of representation, by its concession of a monopoly for the sale of the dynamite used in the mines, by its unjust press law, and by its Aliens Expulsion Act, under which any foreigner can be expelled from the republic without trial, or proven guilt of any offence.

The Boer Government has permitted the theft of three-quarters of a million pounds' worth of gold annually, it has connived at the sale of liquor

to the native mine labourers in contravention of its own laws, its agents have assaulted British citizens, and murdered one without offering apology or reparation ; they have broken up an orderly meeting of Uitlanders ; and degraded their own courts of justice. To this list Mr. James Bryce adds these other grounds of complaint :—

" Thinking of South Africa as practically one country, they (the Uitlanders) complained that here, and here only, were they treated as aliens and inferiors. Food was incredibly dear because a high tariff had been imposed on imports. Water supply, police, and sanitation were all neglected. Not only was Dutch the official language, but in the public schools Dutch was the only medium of instruction, and English children were compelled to learn arithmetic, geography, and history out of Dutch text books. It was these abuses that disposed them to revolt against a government which they despised."

It was in 1892 that they attempted the reasonable and pacific method of agitation by argument. They founded a National Union at Johannesburg and published a statement of their grievances in Dutch for circulation among the Boers. Next,

they held a public meeting, passed resolutions, and appointed a committee to wait upon President Kruger. It was to these gentlemen that the Boer leader said, "Cease holding public meetings and be satisfied; go back to your people and tell them I shall never give them anything."

Two years later, in 1894, thirteen thousand Uitlanders signed a petition asking for the franchise, and in 1895 thirty-eight thousand five hundred signed another, which was, like the first, rejected by the Volksraad.

Then came that effort towards revolt which was frustrated by the impatient act of Dr. Jameson before the Uitlanders could secure arms; and finally, after another two years of still growing discontent, began the efforts of the home Government to secure from President Kruger such concessions as should establish fair business conditions, and a tolerable political status, for the persecuted majority of white residents in the republic.

The conference and correspondence during 1899 between Sir Alfred Milner and President Kruger were mainly concerned with the British demand for a more just mode of meeting the Uitlanders' demand for citizens' rights in the Transvaal.

The law, as framed at the time the last treaty was made between the two countries, fixed five years as the required term of residence ; but, with the inrush of foreigners upon the discovery of gold, the Boors enacted a new law, under which no person not a burgher, or a son of a burgher, could acquire full citizenship in less than fourteen years, or before the age of forty.

At the beginning of the fourteen years he must renounce allegiance to his former country, and declare himself a subject of the Transvaal ; and at the end of the fourteen years he was to have the right—not to a vote—but to ask for one at the hands of the Volksraad, which might then refuse it. The true purpose of this law, as well as its injustice, are too apparent to need pointing out.

Sir Alfred Milner asked for the re-enactment of the original law, in force when the Transvaal pledged itself to give every British resident "the enjoyment of all civil rights, and protection to their lives and property." President Kruger offered to submit a bill giving the franchise in seven years, two of which should be years of waiting, and five for the completion of naturalisation.

The High Commissioner declined to accept terms which required a man to abandon his old

allegiance, and take a half-citizenship years before he could acquire full rights in the new country. The conference was broken off, and the Volksraad passed a law nominally requiring an enfranchisement term of seven years, but in reality preventing the enfranchisement of any Uitlanders who have lived in the Transvaal less than nine years.

But the pith of the matter is outside of and far more important than this. It is that in this matter of the treatment of the foreign resident, the Transvaal Government and the Afrikander Bond—or union of the leading Boers all over South Africa—are acting in concert.

This Bond urges disloyalty to the British upon those citizens who are of Dutch stock. It preaches an offensive policy; it advocates the repudiation of British supremacy, and the prevention of redress to the Uitlanders until Great Britain has surrendered her rights. Thus one race is secretly pledged to drive the other out of South Africa, and this other race, the British, is forced (in the view of Sir Alfred Milner among others) to demonstrate its power and its justice by obtaining for the Uitlander the rights to which he is entitled.

The strained relations between the Uitlanders and the Transvaal Boers, and the manifest dis-

inclination of President Kruger to do anything towards remedying what was complained of, led to a conference between the High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner, and President Kruger at Bloemfontein, in the Free State.

In May, 1899, Sir Alfred Milner told the President that if he would change his policy toward the Uitlanders before things got worse, and take steps to satisfy the reasonable ones among them, who were, after all, the great majority in his country, the independence of his republic would be strengthened, and it would be easier to settle other questions between the two Governments.

The High Commissioner declared that no proposal he would make should threaten the control of the country by the burghers, but President Kruger showed no inclination to meet any of the offers made to him, except one bearing on the form of oath to be administered to intending citizens.

At the second conference of these ambassadors of their respective countries the wily old Boer President took up much of the time with subjects not proposed to Sir Alfred Milner, or bearing upon those he broached.

Thus he talked of a recent petition of the

British in the Transvaal to the Queen as being bogus, complained of the arrival of British troops in the British colonies near by, and declared that the proposition to grant the reasonable requests of the foreigners, who had made his country what it is, would be worse than annexation, and would do away with the independence of his country.

He had the assurance to insist that the interests of foreigners in his State were sufficiently looked after by the second Volksraad, or Lower House of the Boer Parliament—an ineffective, unimportant, makeshift body, established solely to make a hollow pretence of granting a relief which it was powerless even to approach.

The further sittings showed a tendency to be given up to rambling and desultory talks. President Kruger could not be held to the statesmanlike point of the High Commissioner, which was the reconstruction of the franchise laws, so as to give a measure of representation to foreigners by granting a vote upon a five years' residence.

He talked of widely different things—settlement of the Jameson Raid indemnity, incorporation of Swaziland, and arbitration. Sir Alfred Milner, on the other hand, hoped to crystallise his efforts into an attempt to get a franchise law

which would put the Uitlanders in a direct way of settling all other grievances for themselves.

Finally, on the fifth day, President Kruger produced a Reform Bill which had but a faint resemblance to anything the High Commissioner had proposed. In this Bill it was provided that new-comers must register at once, give half a year's notice of intent to apply for naturalisation, which could be obtained in two years thereafter, to be followed in five years by the right of suffrage.

This was unacceptable to Sir Alfred Milner, and nothing more favourable or final resulted from the conference. Autumn followed, the British began to move their troops nearer to the frontiers of the Free State and the Transvaal, and the Boers demanded their return to England. In October they declared it to be their ultimatum that unless the troops were recalled they would resort to war, and thus they, who had been for years preparing for it by equipping themselves with modern weapons and the building of forts, began the fighting. It had been England's plan not to move a great force into Africa until it was needed, and to act upon the defensive until the large

body necessary for a speedy solution of the contest should arrive. This programme she maintained with excessive losses, especially of her officers, at Glencoe and Elandslaagte in mid-October, when the Boers forced the fighting on the Natal frontier.

PART II[1]

THE BOER ULTIMATUM AND ARMAMENT

WAR became officially inevitable on the 9th of October, 1899. Unofficially, it had been inevitable for nearly twenty years. During the whole of that period the Transvaal and the Free State Governments had been arming themselves, upon a scale entirely inconsistent with any mere purpose of maintaining their position among South African States. They were in no danger of aggression from their white neighbours, and they were already sufficiently armed to safeguard them against native risings.

The warlike preparations assumed, after the Jameson Raid, proportions which told all too plainly the end in view. An enormous number

[1] This section and Chapter VII., and the Summary of Events since the relief of Kimberley, have been prepared in London, under the author's direction, as his absence at the seat of war made it impossible for him to consult the records, and gather the material himself.

of field guns of the latest Krupp and Creusot patterns, guns of position, such as the famous "Long Tom," Mauser rifles by the hundred thousand, and cartridges by tens of millions, were poured into Pretoria and Bloemfontein, mainly through the ordinary trade avenues of Cape Colony and Natal.

The British Government took no notice of all this, though foreign residents in Johannesburg knew perfectly well what was going on, and to them, at least, it was no secret that, when the time came, the Dutch Republics would strike a blow for independence.

Still the British Government took no notice. Computations were made by the landrosts and field cornets as to the number of available fighting men, and it was openly stated that at least 60,000 burghers, practically all mounted, could be put into the field. Why? The decisive moment arrived, as has been stated, on the 9th of October, when, after months of shilly-shallying, the Boer Government presented to the British agent at Pretoria a document, which was described by Lord Salisbury as "an audacious defiance."

Although not in form an ultimatum as usually understood in diplomacy, it was so in effect. It

threw off every vestige of allegiance to the British crown; it repudiated any right on the part of her Majesty's Government to interfere in the affairs of the Transvaal; it complained of the massing of troops on the borders of the republic; and it made the cool demand that the troops on the borders should be instantly withdrawn; that all our reinforcements which had arrived since January 1st, 1899 should be removed from South Africa within a reasonable time; and that her Majesty's troops then on the high seas should not be landed in any part of South Africa.

"Failing a satisfactory answer to these demands before 5 p.m.," the message continued, "the Transvaal Government will, with great regret, be compelled to regard the action of her Majesty's Government as a formal declaration of war, for the consequence of which it will not hold itself responsible. Any further movement of troops in the nearer direction of the Transvaal borders will also be regarded as a formal declaration of war."

The British reply was brief and to the point. It merely announced that her Majesty's Government had no further communication to make to Mr. Kruger at that moment. There was then in

Natal a total British force of about fourteen thousand men ; in Cape Colony there was only the ordinary garrison. Practically the whole of the British frontiers were undefended, and what this meant was perceived clearly enough, although too late, when it was announced that the Orange Free State intended to throw in its lot with the Transvaal.

Nothing was at that time accurately known as to the armaments of the Boers. All that the British Government seemed aware of was that the Boers had laid in an enormous store of artillery, and small arms, and ammunition. Nor was anything very clearly understood as to the disposition of the Boer forces. Mr. Kruger's chief complaint against Great Britain was that it had enormously increased its troops on the borders of Cape Colony and the two Republics.

In point of fact, as we knew to our cost later, he himself, and his brother President of the Orange Free State, had made far more extensive and aggressive preparations for war on their sides of the frontier. Large camps had been formed at Volksrust and Sandspruit in Transvaal territory ; the Free Staters had gathered strong forces at Harrismith ; and all was in readiness to

occupy Laing's Nek, and the other passes through the Drakensberg mountains.

On the British side there was only the Natal field force of fourteen thousand men, while, on the other frontiers at Kimberley and Mafeking, there were only three thousand and two thousand five hundred respectively. Even then the British Government do not appear to have realised the seriousness of the task before it. It was not until the war had made some progress, and the surprisingly large strength of the republican forces became developed, that the Government at home made up its mind to anything like effective action.

When, however, it did act, it made a show of considerable vigour. It decided to despatch to South Africa, under General Sir Redvers Buller, a complete army corps of fifty thousand men. This corps was mobilised with great rapidity, and in a very few days the troops were on the transports and afloat. Divisional commands were given to Lord Methuen, Sir William Gatacre, and Sir Francis Clery.

As time went on, and the fortunes of war went steadily against the British, measures were taken on a still vaster scale, and so important were these that they ultimately rose to the dimen-

sions of a supreme Imperial effort, to avert a danger threatening the very existence of the Empire.

It is very interesting to trace the course of these stupendous operations. After the reverse of Nicholson's Nek on the night of October 30–31, orders were given on a wholesale scale for the despatch of troops to the seat of war. Transports were engaged, a second army corps was mobilised, and in a very short time the great liners were conveying reinforcements with all speed southward.

There came, in fact, a continuous stream of steamers from the English ports right up to the middle of November, when the general military situation had become so critical that a fifth division for South Africa was constituted. The permanent service sections B and C of the Army Reserves were called up for permanent service; and other arrangements were made for increasing the forces in the field on a substantial scale.

One of the most interesting features of the campaign now began to assert itself. From all parts of the Empire came offers of men and munitions. These, which had at first been but coldly received by the War Office, were now

gladly accepted. Australia and Canada sent considerable contingents, while the lesser Colonies loyally contributed their share.

So matters went on till the middle of December, when in one week three great disasters overtook the British arms. There was now seen such an outburst of martial and patriotic feeling as had never been recorded in the history of the British Empire. It is hardly too much to say that every man of fighting age was only too anxious to go to the front.

Taking advantage at last of the eagerness of the people to assert the supremacy of our arms, and defend the integrity of the Empire, Government made a number of calls upon the Volunteers and Yeomanry. Of the regulars a sixth division had already been sent out, and a seventh division, with further reinforcements of artillery, including a Howitzer Brigade, was ordered to proceed to South Africa without delay. Volunteers were called for from the Militia, and it was decided to organise a special force from the Yeomanry, to consist of mounted infantry, certain to employ on the field of action all the qualities which distinguish the rural classes in England.

One of the most striking incidents of this

exciting period was the way in which the City of London came to the front. Within a very few days a special corps called the City of London Imperial Volunteers was raised, the cost of their equipment being mainly borne by public subscriptions; and again from Australia and Canada eager contingents were despatched, making the total number of men sent to the seat of war from England, India, and the Colonies, no less than one hundred and fifty thousand men.

No such expedition had ever been undertaken by England, or, for the matter of that, by any other country. All this vast army, with its munitions, stores, medical service, and hospitals, had to be transported a distance of seven thousand miles, and, although there were some blunders, and not a few scandals, this stupendous work was carried through with general smoothness and celerity.

Finally, the supreme command was accepted by Lord Roberts, who only a few hours before had received the news of the heroic death at Colenso of Lieut. the Hon. Frederick Roberts, his only son.

CHAPTER I

CAPETOWN TRANSFIGURED

CAPETOWN wakes up every morning and rubs its eyes, and stares at itself like a man who sees himself after his hair has turned white overnight. It cannot recognise its own photographs in these closing months of 1899.

It used to be a humdrum little seaport capital, which only woke up when a steamer came in from London, but now it is so full of refugees that the pavements of its main thoroughfare are more crowded than those of Regent Street at four o'clock on a summer afternoon.

There are said to be sixty thousand refugees here from Johannesburg and Kimberley, and they have jumped the city up into the semblance of a western metropolis.

One can see that it must have been an interesting place before the war. It clings to the base of

a towering, naked rock, as the seaweed clutches the small boulders on the beach. Leave out the rock, and Capetown bears much resemblance to Galveston, Texas, or is a little like the European quarter of Bombay.

But you cannot leave out the rock, which hangs in the sky at the end of every inland view. It is a mountain, with its top planed off like a table, and white clouds rolling over it as if the cloth was being laid ever so many times a day for meals for the gods of the Hottentots, who must have nothing else to do than to eat, now that their worshippers have succumbed to the lead and the liquids of the white.

Before the war Capetown held a wonderful mixture of human contrasts—a few thousands of Mahommedan Malays in fezes, a few more thousands of English, and a still larger number of "Cape people," who look like negroes, but are a mixture of Dutch, Hottentots, and Bushmen. Dutch is generally heard in the capital, and the colony, because there are five Dutchmen to every four Englishmen here, and the Malays and negroes and their mixtures all think in Dutch.

It is the lingo of the cabbies, newsboys, labourers, servants, street urchins, and of some minor

officials. As a matter of fact, it is not really Dutch which these speak, but a hodge-podge of Dutch, Kaffir, Bush, and Hottentot words.

Capetown's vehicles are like no others. Trains of waggons are pulled about by traction engines; smaller loads go on flat platforms upon low wheels; the country folk ride in two-wheeled, two-horse hooded carriages called Cape carts, and the city folk use electric trams and Cape hansoms. The tramcars fill the air with the clangour of gongs, and the grinding of wheels against curves. But the hansoms are fit to win a leather medal for drollness. They are made by somebody who once saw a real hansom, and then nearly forgot how it looked. They are bulky and low, and have curious tasselled curtains in the windows. They are closed by flaps like old-fashioned cellar-doors, and they are all named, as if they were yachts.

The names are painted on the curved sides of the roofs. "Lily of Killarney," "Alert," "Despatch," "Belle of the Cape," "Cecil Rhodes," "Duke of Connaught"—these are some of the names you read on them, and I am told that, presently, some cabbies will have the enterprise to rechristen their cabs "Glencoe" and "Mafeking."

More disreputable cabmen never were seen. They do not mind being in their shirt-sleeves, or wearing umbrella-shaped hats, or dressing almost in rags for that matter.

Capetown is somewhat free and easy, like a great many other English colonial towns. I found two negro chambermaids asleep on the chairs in my bedroom at the Grand Hotel this afternoon. I apologised for disturbing them, but they begged me not to speak of it, as they were thoroughly rested.

The shops outrank those you will find in many provincial cities of Great Britain. They show enormous stocks of goods from England, Germany, and America. As far as I can discover, the only home manufactures are matches, ice, and Cape tobacco. The commonest walking-sticks come from Germany, and even the neckties and collars are marked "made in London for ——, Capetown."

There are fortunes to be gathered here by the manufacture of necessaries, for labour is abundant, cheap, and tractable, and there is a half continent to supply—an English half continent, it will be, in a few weeks or months.

But you find the slenderest variety of food,

because their agriculture is primitive, and the raising of delicacies has not been thought of. The cooks are either men who have failed at everything else, or women who turn a five-course dinner out of a frying-pan. Stopping at a first-class hotel reminds me of life on the Channel boats that run to St. Malo, but I think differently when I pay my bill, for the charges are impressive. They expect a shilling for the risk of accepting a Bank of England £5 note.

This is war time, and Capetown is the head-quarters of the British. It keeps step to the bugle and the drum, and nobody runs out of doors any longer to see soldiers on the march. The Volunteers do most of the marching, as they are in camps near by in the fields.

When the Regulars and the Marines go to the front, they are rushed from the ships to the cars so quickly that paragraphs about them in the next day's papers attract more attention than the actual movements of the men.

During several nights in October the railway station in this city was the most exciting spot on earth. The earlier trains had been fired on by the Boers, who had swarmed further and further south, and every night the train's journey was shortened,

until at last it ran no further north than De Aar, well within the colony.

To limit the crowds that came to see the troops off, threepence was charged for admission to the platform, and even then there was a crush worth going far to avoid. The carriages were filled with soldiers in khaki, officers in civilian attire, and hundreds of Cape Boys and Kaffirs, who were hired as transport helpers.

Other officers, idle citizens, wondering Mahometans, and excited negresses formed the crowd that saw them depart. The Tommies kept quiet and smoked, while the Cape negroes sang and shouted, and the semi-savage Kaffirs chanted war songs and danced, mainly with their hips and stomachs, as performers do in the streets of Cairo exhibitions.

I stopped and talked to a dozen of these Kaffirs. "Oh, I've heard de Queen," said one. "She spoke to me, and I heard what she said. She said, 'Boy, you better go to war!'"

At this the whole dozen yelled a war-cry, and the song and dance were renewed.

The supreme moment comes when the train starts. Then the Tommies leap to their feet, and thrust their hands out of the windows for a good-bye shake.

"Don't be too proud, sir," one of them called to me.

But nobody is too proud to shake good luck and a God-speed to the soldier rushing to battle.

Though I can hardly believe it myself, I saw smart officers of the finest English regiments shaking hands not only with the privates, but with the Kaffirs, as the train swung by, and the air was torn with shouts, and songs, and cheers.

Whenever more troops come in these scenes will be repeated, until the war ends. Where the troops are going each night few persons know, for though this is a British colony, every other man carries Boer blood, and is a possible sympathiser with the enemy.

Therefore there is a strong censorship on gossip, as there is upon Press news. Whether the brave boys are going to Natal, or straight north to De Aar no one can guess, for the first part of each journey is the same.

CHAPTER II

SIR ALFRED MILNER'S TRIALS

THE view of Sir Alfred Milner as Governor of the British and not of the Dutch in this colony, and as a man whose house has been overrun with Jingoes, and plotters against the peace of the colony, is not at all the view of him which has been adopted in Capetown.

I have heard his position discussed by some of the most prominent men in private and public life, who have lived there either since birth or since boyhood, and who are quite competent to pass judgment upon his relation to the colony.

If Dutch citizens of the Cape are displeased with the Governor, it is only because he is an Englishman, and has England at his back. That is more than sufficient to anger a great percentage of them. But they are no more displeased with

him now, than the English were six months after he came.

The war was not brought about by him, but has been preparing for at least twenty years. During that period the loyal English here and in Natal have at times felt that they could not endure their trials, at times that the home Government was never going to rescue them or itself from the rapidly-growing tendencies of a most dangerous situation.

It has been all along a condition in which part of the population was loyal, and the other part was planning an Afrikander empire wherein the British, already despised, were to have no voice or even resting place. When Sir Alfred Milner first came to take this most thankless post, it was with the leading men of the Afrikander party that he spent so much of his time as to cause the English to feel that he was being hoodwinked, and that once again there had come to them a High Commissioner who would tide over a long term of office without mending the condition of affairs.

They knew that in such a case the irreconcilable Dutch of the entire half continent would still further arm and equip themselves for rebellion, while the loyal British would remain helpless

under more and more insufferable insult and abuse, unarmed in the Dutch States, and impotent in their own largest colony.

President Kruger fancied that Sir Alfred was neither Governor of the Dutch nor of the English, but was a plaything of the cunning Government at Pretoria.

A now famous speech of the Dutch President puts his views as pithily as words can express them. Kruger has lost the thumb of his left hand, and telling this story he used the four remaining fingers of that hand to emphasise his words :—

"First," said he, holding his right hand little finger with his left hand, "there was Bartle Frere —psst! I got the best of him"; with that he doubled that finger down. "Then," said he, taking hold of the next finger, "there was Rosmead. Psst! I got the best of him," and he turned that finger down. "Next came Loch. Psst! I got the best of him. And then came Rosmead again. Psst! he was nothing, no more than before. And now," he said, pretending to be going to turn down his missing thumb as he had bent his fingers, "here is Milner. Ach, Gott! dar is nicht!" (there is nothing!).

Thus we see that at the outset, when the English feared that the Dutch were bewitching the Governor with their pretensions of loyalty and promises of reform, the Dutch were quite as well satisfied that, if he was not their Governor, he was at least not to be feared by them.

About this time, an American, a conspicuous member of this community, returned from a visit to the country, where he met the Governor, and hearing a group of Englishmen complaining of this new disappointment, broke out with this comment :—

"He's pumping the other side dry, I tell you. I met him and spent an afternoon with him, and when we parted I got to thinking over what had been said on both sides, and I discovered that I had told him everything I knew, and he had told me nothing. He pumped me dry, and I tell you all now that when you see him with Hofmeyr, and Schreiner, and all the rest of those fellows, he is simply doing to them what he did to me, and what he will do to you when your turn comes. He is pumping both sides dry."

That view of the new Governor, so fresh at the time, has now come to be regarded as prophetic, for when Sir Alfred had heard everything

that could be told him by the Dutch leaders, he began the same process with the English. He did not drop the Dutch, or quarrel with them, nor has he done so yet. To judge him by his public conduct, he seems to have taken mental notes of all that he heard from either side, and to have compared, and examined, and tried to balance, the two views of the situation.

At last he came to a decision, slowly, calmly, and with judicial deliberation.

What he learned, and why he believed the situation in the Transvaal required immediate relief, the people of England do not know, and can hardly imagine, if what is told me by the most responsible and best informed Englishmen in this colony is true.

Again, if what they say is to any extent true, for all tell of precisely the same state of affairs, then Sir Alfred Milner is at once worthy of the extremest sympathy and the utmost admiration. He has been placed in a position in which he has been debarred from making public in his own country those facts which weighed most heavily in the formation of his opinion.

The publication of such facts could have done nothing but increase the evils of the situation

here, and perhaps put a match to explosives which thus far, thanks to his diplomacy, were still at rest. As it is he is no longer criticised by any Englishmen, and if the Afrikander element is dissatisfied, it is a condition not to their credit as British subjects. As Governor he "pumped everybody dry," and now as High Commissioner he is acting devotedly for the best interests of the Crown.

I have had the good fortune to pay my respects to Sir Alfred Milner at Government House during a visit which was necessarily brief, because he is working sixteen hours a day. He shows the consequence of his toil in a face and frame so thinned that his friends in London would scarcely know him. Care, too, has written its lines deeply on his countenance. He makes such an impression upon a visitor, that not even a Little Englander who saw him here could carry criticism very far in writing of him afterwards.

His modesty is his most remarkable characteristic, and next to that, I think, one notices his earnestness, and the degree to which his mind is concentrated upon the situation around him. In the play of his features and voice there is great evidence of kindliness and sympathy. These, with a modicum of humour thrown in, are the

chief ingredients in what is called tact, so that you cannot see him, talk to him, or be with him without feeling that since diplomacy has failed to relieve the tension here, and war has followed, it cannot have been the fault of so gentle, so self-possessed, so calm a man.

I have also seen Sir Forestier Walker at his desk in a bare room of the old Dutch "castle" or fort, and have enjoyed that visit, for he is a man of the frankest and most affable nature.

Both the civil and the military leaders are of one type—tall, slender, strong, and wiry men, whose youth resists their years, and who take so much of the burden of the moment on their own shoulders, that all who are under them work cheerfully and with a will.

CHAPTER III

BRAVE OFFICERS AND RICH REFUGEES

ON every ship that arrives in Capetown from the north are many British officers. Some bring a dozen or twenty; others as many as fifty. They are the pick and flower of Englishmen. Most of them are young men, in the late twenties and early thirties, bearing distinguished names, exhibiting the long, refined faces of the British aristocracy, carrying themselves at once like dandies and like athletes.

The one strange thing about them is that nobody is sending them here, and they do not know to what part of the seat of war they are bound, or what they are going to do. They only know that they could not keep away. They are here to see what they call "the fun." It is a war against bushwhackers, guerillas, and sharpshooters, in which a far greater proportion of officers than

men are certain to be killed, but that does not matter to them. The first accounts of skirmishes they read after they have landed tell of the special dangers which they have to face. Apparently the manner in which the enemy reveals its presence among the hills out Natal way is by the dropping of an officer from his saddle, or in his tracks, as he pushes ahead of his men. What of that? It is part of "the fun," they say.

These fine young fellows have come during their leave of absence, which has been well earned by active service in disagreeable climates, in lonely garrison posts, in the Sudan, or on the Indian frontier. One who came out with me has given up a billet for which he had long been striving, and which was offered to him just as he had determined to come here and do a little fighting for variety. Another of my companions on the voyage was starting fully equipped to make a tour of the world, but this excitement proved more attractive. A third officer on the same ship arrived in England to see his people, from whom he had long been separated; he got, however, no further than London, and only stayed four days when he caught the spirit of his comrades and bolted for South Africa. On another ship was a

young man with an income of £40,000 a year who was just about to be married, but instead of taking his bride to St. George's, he asked her down to Waterloo to see him off for Durban.

I watched these men on shipboard during seventeen days. They were up at six o'clock every morning, running so many dozen times round the deck in slippers and pyjamas in order to keep themselves in good condition, then plunging into a cold bath, and coming back to the deck again in flannels, as fresh and blooming as new-cut flowers. All day they read about South Africa in the little libraries they had brought along with them, and which they exchanged for similar books that other men had brought on board. They were, emphatically, the best of Englishmen —wide-awake, well-informed, proud, polished, polite, considerate, and abounding with animal health and high spirits.

The more I saw of them the more I resented all that we hear about various fanatical people on earth who are celebrated for not being afraid to die—the Sudan dervishes, the stolid Turks, the pilfering Albanians, and now, last of all, these wooden-headed Boers. Of some of these we are told that they welcome death, of others that they believe themselves in God's special care.

And what of these English? Are they afraid to die? Who would say such a thing—or think it for a moment—of these splendid fellows who have led England's ranks against every fanatic on earth except the Turk? They are as ready to die as any men, and they rank above their foes as towers rise above the lowly grass, because they risk their lives with a full knowledge of what they are doing, and because in risking themselves they risk the most enviable lot of which any man can boast.

The incomes and homes, the wives and sisters, the companions and sports and clubs of these men, the comforts and the luxuries with which they can surround themselves whenever they will, are ties which must make life dearer to them than the bare, hard lot of most of the poor wretches whom historians and poets have glorified for not fearing death; but every one of those, I honestly believe, fears it more than these splendid, dashing fellows, who keep on carving empires out of the map of the world to swell the British Empire.

"Been to Government House?" I asked one of these men yesterday.

"No," said he, "and I'm not going. I am afraid they might send me somewhere out of the thick of things. I don't want them to know I'm

here. I'm going to wherever it's liveliest. I'll be certain to find somebody under whom I have served, or with whom I have fought, and so I'll see the best of it."

And that was the man who told me that out of a hundred men with whom he studied for the service seventy-five are dead already—fifteen of illnesses, and sixty of bullet wounds and spear thrusts!

It is disgusting to leave these men, and turn into any one of the Capetown hotels to find yourself surrounded by the rich refugees from Johannesburg, and to hear them cry like children as they tell you what they will lose if the British do not hurry up and take the Transvaal, before the Boers destroy Johannesburg.

In their dismay they actually weep over their plates at dinner, and half-strangle themselves by sobbing as they drink their whisky at bed-time. The Mount Nelson, the Queen's, and the Grand Hotels are all full of these merchants and millionaires, faring on the fat of the land, idle, loafing all of every day, and discussing what per cent. of their losses the British Government will pay when they put in their claims at the end of the war.

Some came here as clerks, some as labourers in

the mines, and some are merchants who brought £10 worth of goods out from Birmingham a dozen years ago. They tell you that they have left £100,000 worth, or £80,000 worth of goods in their shop, and that altogether £25,000,000 is in danger of destruction in Johannesburg.

"Oh, mine Got!" one has just been saying to me; "I can'd dell how much I shall lose by dis peezness. I shpeak mit much feeling, my frent. Blease excoose me grying. Vot do you dink? Do you dink I can git back dirty-dree per cent. of vot I lose from de British Government? Oh, Got! den I lose £60,000—ain'd it derrible?"

They are pulling their long faces all over the place, and shedding their tears wherever you meet them. It is enough to make a statue ill to have to hear and see them and move among them. Why don't they equip a regiment of rough-riders or make up a battalion of volunteers among themselves? Why don't they fight? The war has jeopardised their property, and they have a keener interest in it than any Tommy, or any officer now at the front. How can they see the cream and flower of English manhood rushing down here to spill its precious blood for them, and never feel a blush of shame, or a pang of any emotion except

grief over personal losses which will still leave many of them rich?

Really, Capetown is a wonderful place. It is worth the journey to see the streets blocked by able young men, and the hotels crowded by rich refugees, while each night's train takes out the fearless gentlemen who are deliberately risking not only their lives but more of worldly advantage than can ever come to these skulkers, who cling to the shelter of England's guns, and weep while they wait for men to die, that they may rush up to the British Treasury with their claims.

If the exhibition these refugees are making in Capetown were as important as it is conspicuous, one would think the Englishmen in charge here would drop the contest where it is, and go home in disgust. But it is only a phase of a side issue, quite apart from the principle at stake.

CHAPTER IV

THE BOER AT HOME

A GERMAN correspondent took me aside in the City Club one day and said: "You see, the Boers have been playing us all for fools. They have allowed the world to believe that they can only fight behind rocks, and while the British acted on this belief they have come right out in the open and given them a huge surprise, bottling up Kimberley and cutting off all communication with it, besides capturing trains, destroying bridges, and all the rest."

Almost as he spoke out of his dense ignorance, an American born in Natal, and now a man of wealth and position in South Africa, drifted to our group and told us his very different opinion of the enemy.

"The British talk about keeping on the defensive until their whole force is in position in

December; but, mark my words, it will all be over before then. I was born among the Boers, I speak their language, I have hunted with them, seen them in war, been intimate with them in all the States and colonies, and I tell you they will not hold out. They are fanatics, but their fanaticism goes only so far. They have never seen more than a thousand British in war, and these they have potted at from behind rocks while the British were wholly exposed.

"They fancy this is to be always the rule. I can cite you instances in several wars with natives, where the Boers absolutely refused to occupy positions of danger. They want to kill, but do not at all relish being killed. They are so closely related, and so much inter-married, that the killing of a Boer makes mourning in forty families. The killing of forty Boers would practically put the whole Transvaal in mourning.

"I will predict within a very little what is going to happen. To begin with, they detest discipline, and always dispute with their leaders. Every man who knows them will tell you that even when they make up a hunting party they waste the best time of the day arguing over every plan that is proposed. Englishmen who hunt

with them have learned to say to them, 'You stay here and talk it out, we are going in such a direction,' and then they go off, and leave the Boers to follow them. In war they will want to argue every plan that is proposed, and they will rapidly grow more and more discontented.

"Their habit is for each Boer to look out for himself. All are farmers, and every man in the field has left his affairs with no one in charge. They are not professional soldiers like the British, they are not willing to die like the British, they are not paid like the British. By and by they will begin to go home. They will say that they must look after their farms, and when they decide to do so, nothing can stop them.

"I passed through the Transvaal a few days ago, and I had two remarkable conversations which go to show how peculiar the Boers are. The first was with a man who had been sent to a Boer house to collect some taxes that were long overdue. He rode up to the house, called out the head of the family, and stated his errand. The Boer turned on his heel and went indoors at once. Presently he came out again with his loaded gun.

"'See here,' said he, 'I own this house and all the land as far as you can see around you. It is mine. I am king here. You go back and tell Paul Kruger that if he sends another man here for that five pounds of taxes I will kill the man. As for you, if you say any more about it I will shoot you.'

"My second talk was with a field cornet, whom I chanced to meet. Said he, 'They are talking of going to war with the English. Well, my people all hate the damned English, but they are not satisfied with the way things are going. They tell me that they hear that Oom Paul is rich; that he rides in a carriage, and does no work. They say they are poor and are getting nothing out of the Government stealings, and that if they are sent to war Kruger had better look out, or they may come with their guns and ask him to divide with them!'"

"I want to see the Boers," said I. "I think of going to Stellenbosch to see them in their homes. Is that a good place to test?"

"No. You might as well go to Piccadilly Circus to see the English farmer or the Scotch Highlander. The Boers in Cape Colony are so very different from those in the Transvaal that we

never call them Boers. We speak of them as Afrikanders. They are one hundred years ahead of the Transvaal Boer. They are refined. They have schools and colleges. They have never been far or long removed from civilisation and the English. You will get very wrong ideas if you go and see the Cape Dutch and write them up as Boers.

"Would you like me to describe a Transvaal Boer home and family? Very well, I know them nearly all, and have stopped with scores of them, for they are kindly and hospitable, except when their animosities are aroused. A Boer house is a building made of brick and roofed with zinc. It is divided into two rooms, with a wing or lean-to at the back. That wing is the kitchen where the Kaffir girl works. The other two rooms are the bedroom and the living-room. The sleeping room has as many beds as are required—usually a large one for the man and wife, and another for the children. Often you will see the children's bed pushed under that of the parents. The living-room contains a long table and some chairs, seated and backed with strips of leather. There will be another, smaller table, covered with American oil-cloth, on which the frau keeps her simple treasures.

These and some pictures, pinned up without frames, are the only ornaments, and a sort of settee with a seat made of leather strips completes the furniture.

"There may sometimes be a harmonium in the corner of the room, and if you can play any simple tunes the whole family will dance as long as you like to play. For books there is certain to be a bible, and there will be a prayer-book if they can afford it. They are religious, you know; that is, they go to church, and are fond of thinking themselves in God's keeping, but they never let religion interfere with business. At a horse trade they will cheat the back teeth out of your head.

"You have heard that they sleep in their clothes? Well, the man takes off his coat and waistcoat, and sleeps in whatever else he has on. The wife drops off an outer skirt, perhaps, before she gets into bed. Of late extra rooms have been added to the houses of the better class Boers; but in the old style, typical, two-roomed house, whoever stops overnight must sleep with the old folks or children. When you sleep with the old folks the husband always takes the middle of the bed.

"A story, which I know is true, is told of Bishop Merriman. He was once entertained in this way, and when he woke in the morning he found that the Boer had crept out to look after his cattle. He gave one glance at his sleeping companion, and dropped out of bed as quickly as if he had been thrown out.

"As to any signs of their ablutions, you will seldom see a Boer with a clean face. One of them has written to a Capetown relative that his people will not wash until they have driven the British into the sea. That sounds impressive, but will not entail much hardship upon his people.

"They tell a story about Paul Kruger's 'polish' after he had been to London and seen the Queen and Mr. Gladstone. It is not a true tale, but it might easily be true of the average Boer. The story goes that when Kruger came home, and was about to get into bed, his wife came in and saw him dressed in a suit of pyjamas. 'Paul!' she exclaimed, 'what are you doing with those English fool clothes? Take them off and put on your trousers, and go to bed like an honest burgher.'

"As to their intelligence, you know the very old story of the Englishman who was walking

through Cape Colony, and was warned never to say he was English in any house where he was asking for a meal. He always said he was 'from Yorkshire,' and was handsomely treated. I don't know whether that is true or not, but it is not an exaggerated illustration.

"A leading Boer told me the other day that his countrymen would not stop until they have driven the English into Table Bay. 'And then,' said he, 'we shall go on and capture England.'

"'How can you do that without ships?' I asked him.

"'Oh,' he replied, 'how did Moses get the children of Israel across the Red Sea? They did not need any ships. Just in the same fashion God will find a way for us.'

"Another Boer who was talking of England, said to me, 'I suppose you can see England from Capetown, can't you?'"

Finally, my friend closed his remarks by saying that it was impossible to give me a clear idea of the Boers in such a short talk. He cautioned me to recollect that there are the Dutch in Cape Colony, who are one hundred years ahead of the better-class Dutch who live in houses in the Transvaal.

"These," he said, "are the ones about whom I have been speaking. But these, in turn, are far ahead of the Boers who move north and south with their cattle every year, and live at least a part of the time in tents."

CHAPTER V

IDLERS AND MILLIONAIRES

THE refugees, by whom London had dealt so generously, formed the most conspicuous feature of every landscape in Capetown.

The people of the city went about their business, and were doing many times more of it than they ever had done before ; but they made scarcely any show, they were so outnumbered on all sides by the refugees. These, having nothing else to do, lined the pavements, blocked the shop doors, and formed living walls round the open spaces where Volunteers seemed to be for ever drilling.

Worry breeds worry, and a week ago the authorities were so anxious lest they might have trouble with the disloyal Dutch subjects of the Queen, that they went further, and borrowed trouble by anticipating possible desperation among

the strangers when the time came that all should have spent the little money they possess.

The police had orders not to allow pedestrians to loiter in the streets, and it was a difficult matter to live in the city, because one could not wait for a tramcar, or stop to shake hands with a friend, without being ordered by a policeman to move on. Such zeal was too excessive to last, and soon the crowds were allowed to stand about as they pleased.

There were thousands of these refugees. They appeared to be all men, because the women were kept in their lodgings and the buildings allotted to them, looking after their children.

It was the men only who were crowding the streets, mainly young fellows who were miners in Johannesburg before they were expelled. They used to earn as much as £24 a month, out of which the majority spent no more than £8 for living. They are so generally thrifty that large numbers went to England every year, and those who did not dissipate their savings in this manner accumulated tidy sums in the bank. Among them were Americans, Australians, English, and other Europeans, but the great majority were what we call Anglo-Saxons.

Scores of hard characters had come here with them, and they may give trouble when the pinch comes ; but they had not done much mischief yet.

The banks now displayed warnings to customers not to leave their money on the counters, as several sums had been snatched by thieves, and once in a while there was a commotion in the streets over the enterprise of a pickpocket ; but South African mining crowds have always been quite orderly, and they are likely to keep their good name.

Some of the most unruly Uitlanders in the Transvaal, many of whom were released from the gaols, were rumoured to have been landed at Delagoa Bay, penniless and hungry, and to have set that little place in a panic of fright, but that class had not reached Capetown.

The air vibrated with pitiful stories told by the refugees of their trials on the way to British protection. Men had been driven away from the bedsides of dying children ; enceinte women had been hustled out of the Transvaal along with the strongest ; Boers had slapped the faces of women refugees for complaining of ill-treatment, and thousands of men and women had been obliged to carry all their goods for miles, where the metals of

the railway were torn up near the Orange Free State border.

The theme of the moment was Boer outrages; but this was natural under the circumstances, and while many of the stories were true, many others were neither quite true nor quite false. We are fighting the Boer, and since he has chosen to resort to war, it will be enough for him if he is served with the best fighting that England knows how to give him.

At a meeting of the officials of the city it was agreed that several hundreds of these idle men should be offered work at reclaiming land, at railway building elsewhere in the colony, at making macadam for roads and streets, and at other labour, much of it being forced, in order to give self-support to those who are eager to work and unwilling to take charity.

It was not a moment too early to begin providing this relief for the men. The women, who seemed to be generally in greater distress, were in the care of the Ladies' Relief Committee, a very energetic and enthusiastic body. Over all was the gigantic Lord Mayor's Fund, which had been very little drawn upon as yet. How far it would go, and what would happen when all the

refugees were penniless, time alone could disclose. There were men in Capetown who pulled very long faces when this subject was discussed, and some who said frankly that they expected a period of lawlessness to end the extraordinary situation.

In the meantime, it had to be remembered that there was a class of millionaire refugees whose lot was very unlike that of these idlers in the streets. So very many millionaires have been pointed out to me that I suspect the term is quite an elastic one, which takes in everybody who can afford to pay from a pound to two pounds a day at the best hotels in the city. Some few were undoubtedly very rich, and are even famous for their successes on the Rand.

When I think of these fortunate folk, two very pleasant pictures rise before my memory. One is a scene at the Queen's Hotel, down on the bay, where flowers and grass meet the dark green sea. The moon hangs like a brilliant ball amid a myriad brighter stars and planets than we of the north ever see, and all their beams concentrate upon a well ordered garden, on whose paths the so-called millionaires stroll after dinner.

The men smoke, and the ladies in stylish gowns parade to and fro, laughing and chatting as if

there were no war that had made them all exiles from their former land, and luxurious homes. A great many here are Hebrews.

The next scene is at the Mount Nelson Hotel. It is dinner time. A grand dining-hall, sparkling with plate and crystal, and set with snowy table linen, contains sixty or seventy persons in ultra-fashionable attire. The ladies are in *décolleté* dresses, and gems flash upon their necks and bodices. Musicians play to them from a gallery at one end of the hall, and Swiss waiters serve them with the delicacies of the London market, brought here in refrigerators by the ships of the Castle line.

The talk is of the opera, the play, the day's drive or sail. Nothing that can be imagined could be in stronger contrast with what we think of refugees, than the luxury and calm of such scene.

Some of those present here are Englishmen and Americans, but many are of that persuasion which once cut so important a figure in the Rand, who were then, apparently, able to enjoy the society and companionship of all the others. To such a man I one day expressed a rather slighting opinion of Johannesburg. Tears came to his eyes, and his voice thickened.

"I am a Cherman," said he, "und I haf lived in England, but what do I care for such places if I can live in Johannesburg. That is de finest place in dis vorld, vhere ve hef de best soziety, de lufliest homes, de most wirtuous people, und de habbiest dimes vot it is bossible to imachin. Shall I give you a picture of von home in Johannesbirg?

"Vell, it is efening, und der friends of de family have come to de droring-room from a dinner vhich you can't beat for a sovereign a head in London. Dere is music by our daughters, and von of 'em is singing. Ve can't haf Patti every night, but you hear the sweetest voices und der loveliest songs, und indellect is not missing.

"Over in a corner a man speaks, berhaps, a leetle astronomy, vhile all ofer der room men and vimmen are discussing der latest literary dopics. Und, peside all dot, in a small room in der back of der house, a few friends amuse demselves mit cards."

The more I think of that finished picture of "de best soziety and most wirtuous beople," the more I am astonished that we do not see a corps of millionaires arming and rushing north to wrest their little paradise from the Boers.

CHAPTER VI

CLIMATE AND KAFFIRS

TO be perfectly happy in November anywhere between the Cape and the Zambesi, the traveller should take a fig-leaf for a daytime costume, and a Laplander's suit of furs for the night.

I take off all that the law allows every day, and then gasp in the shade of my tent, but at night I do myself up in a lambswool wrapper, two ordinary blankets, and a steamer rug, and lie down to listen to the rattle of my teeth, until the sun begins to blaze through the canvas at daybreak. We who are at the headquarters at De Aar are having what the tradesmen would call a choice line of selected weather, every known kind coming in each twenty-four hours, and all served to us in wholesale lots.

Often half a dozen sorts and degrees get mixed

up. At such times we have a blistering sunshine with an Antarctic breeze blowing through it. Then on the top of that comes a Sudanese sandstorm made up of whirls that obscure the sun, and play the mischief with the camp, lifting up the skirts of the tents, and coating everything red.

In one of these whirls you can lay a clean white handkerchief between two overcoats, and when you take it out it will look as if it had been soaked in beef-tea. After the dust whirl comes a tropical thunder shower, at the end of which the sun sets with a splendour no painter would dare try to put on canvas. As for the effect of the climate on man, it is not fair to say it is healthy, and let it go at that. If I may judge from this part of Cape Colony in November, it actually beats Colorado, in the United States.

To go to Colorado you must be a millionaire with only one lung, and you must keep your lung, and part with your million. But here the rule is to come penniless, with no lungs. Thus established, you develop new lungs, and become a millionaire. All the African millionaires started with neither money nor respiratory organs, and are now the most energetic, able-bodied men of business alive. Paul Kruger is an exception. He

is having bad luck. But he began unfairly with sound lungs.

We are on the edge of the Karroo Desert. It is a tract which looks like a rubbish-shooting ground of imperial size. It is everywhere rolling, and framed by great hills, except where the billows of baked and stony earth take the form of kopjes, (called "coppies"), or small hills. The entire country is about equally spotted with small stones and little dry tufts of vegetation, mainly sage brush. These are so bare and dry that they look like roots. The barren watercourses torture little trees to grow beside them, and these also are so bare and brown that they might as well be turned bottom upward.

In every direction the view is unobstructed for miles, yet you see nothing but the same burnt desert with the hot air dancing over it. There are occasional little herds of goats tended by native children, but they never show until you are close upon them. The Karroo might well be a heaven for snakes, lizards, and beetles, but I saw none—nor any living thing except a few goats, a few stately ostriches, a few Kaffirs in rags or blankets, and one small black-and-white bird that would pass for an undersized magpie at home. Silence,

solitude, desolation—multiply these a million-fold, and you have the Karroo.

It is not without beauty, and it is not without a future. Everywhere, in everything, its colours are wondrous. Close at hand the hills are almost brick-red, a little farther away others are dove-coloured, while the farthest ones are of varying shades of purple. Tufts and splotches of vivid green appear wherever there is or has recently been water, and even the stones and shrubs are full of colour.

I have said that the ground is stony. It is so stony that you cannot make up your mind whether the thin soil is being formed of disintegrating stones, or whether there once was a soil which has been washed off down to the broken surface of the bed-rock. And yet man can do with it what the Mormons have done with the great American desert, now fast becoming a garden land. In some places the water is thirty feet below the surface; in others fifteen hundred to two thousand feet—but there always is water, and once it bathes the surface it acts like a magician's wand.

Whenever you see a railway station it is in an oasis of green, with willow and eucalyptus trees, flowers, and vegetables. Before I woke up one

morning the train was at a place called Matjesfontein, and a man was calling out my name. When I was dressed and out on the platform I found that a Mr. J. D. Logan had heard I was passing through, and wished to invite me to breakfast.

As I rubbed my eyes I saw far and away on every side the stony, tufted, shimmering desert, yet close beside me were tree-shaded cottages, with blooming gardens and lawns around each. Hurried away from the picturesque station to a handsome house, I found a luxuriously ordered table, smoking hot viands led off by salmon from England, with trained servants to add to comfort as abundant as any one could wish.

This was Mr. Logan's village, and he is building a fine hotel as its chief glory. While we ate breakfast he dictated to his secretary letters of introduction to people further north, and before I finished my coffee the letters were handed to me type-written. When the train took me off Mr. Logan started on a shooting trip. The whole episode was like a tatter of dreamland—a little spring of enterprise gushing out in the desert—and yet just the sort of thing one runs upon in South Africa.

Close to every railway station, and hugging it for that companionship which all negroes love, are the huts of the Kaffirs. They are of every sort that costs no money and little labour. Some are holes in the earth roofed over with tin or tarpaulin, some are low huts of adobe (mud-brick) walls, some are made of that corrugated iron which is the eyesore of South Africa.

There is not a thing about these Kaffirs, or their costumes, or their houses, that I have not noticed about the Guinea negroes of Mississippi, and the rest of the "black belt" of the United States. I begin to think with Burns that "a (black) man's a (black) man for a' that." Here and in America he is equally shiftless, equally ragged, equally jaunty in his rags, equally happy in his misfortunes, equally prone to lie in the sun, to laugh, to sing, and to pilfer.

One of the queerest things about the Kaffirs is that though there are millions of them in South Africa they make no mark on the landscape. They herd in little bands in the bushes, and by the stations and villages, and you never have the faintest notion of their numbers.

The Government is hiring these blacks by the hundreds at the advance camp at De Aar, and is

paying them—what do you think? Four pounds ten a month, with clothing, lodging, and food thrown in. It is past the comprehension of Tommy Atkins how such things can be, and I have heard the officers who distribute London-made clothing say that they wish they had as good garments for themselves.

The reason for this treatment of the blacks is that they ask high wages, and are excellent drivers and transport men. It is also true that the British everywhere demoralise the blacks with too generous treatment, which is as bad for them as Boer unkindness.

CHAPTER VII

NATAL AND LADYSMITH

WE have seen the circumstances in which the war opened, and under which the respective combatants prepared themselves for the encounter. The only organised field force on the spot from the first was with General Sir George White, who had arrived at Durban from India on the 7th of October. His fourteen thousand troops were distributed between Pietermaritzburg, Estcourt, Colenso, Ladysmith, and Glencoe, names which were unfamiliar at that time to the majority of Englishmen, but are sadly familiar now.

In his first despatch, General White records that, on the 10th of October, the Governor of Natal informed him of the ultimatum, and that an outbreak of war on the evening of the 11th of October might be regarded as certain. It is not too much to say that the gallant general,

even at that early period, regarded the military situation with dismay.

He knew that the Boers and the Free Staters were massed on the frontiers, ready to descend upon the northern territory of Natal from the passes of the Drakensberg mountains; he knew also that, from a military point of view, this northern department of Natal was untenable by the forces at his disposal. He therefore advised that a great portion of that territory should be abandoned, and we now know that he would have vacated the whole of the country to the north of the Tugela, had he not been overruled by political considerations. It is to this fatal error that most of our subsequent misfortunes are to be attributed.

The Boers crossed the frontiers, both on the north and west, on the 12th of October, and next day the Transvaal flag was floating over Charlestown in Natal.

The enemy came on in three columns. The main column, under General Joubert, occupied Newcastle, and then marched south. Viljoen's column cut the railway from Glencoe Junction to Ladysmith at Elandslaagte, and there took up a position. Lucas Meyer, with the third column,

crossed the Buffalo, and marched westward on Dundee.

Close to this, the centre of the coal mining of Natal, was Sir W. Penn Symons, with the 18th Hussars, a brigade division of Royal Artillery, the 1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment and mounted infantry company, the 1st Battalion King's Royal Rifles and mounted infantry company, the 2nd Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers and mounted infantry company, with details. In all, about 3,500 men. Against him were gathered an unknown number of Boers.

It was afterwards learnt that, before delivering an attack, General Joubert intended to effect a junction with Lucas Meyer. General Symons, however, was prompt enough to counteract this plan. On the morning of the 20th of October he came so closely in touch with Meyer's column that hostilities were opened, and a general battle developed. The Boers occupied a strong position on Talana Hill, 5,000 yards from the British camp at Glencoe.

The attack was opened by the Boers, who fired early on the morning of the 20th on a mounted infantry picket standing east of Dundee, at the junction of two roads from drifts across the

Buffalo. Two hours afterwards, the British camp was not a little surprised by a shell which came thundering from the Boer lines.

Sir William Symons does not seem to have known that the Boers had any artillery at all, whereas they had at least six guns. Their shells, however, buried themselves in the soft earth, and did not burst. Nevertheless, the Boer artillerymen made such excellent practice that Sir William Symons moved the majority of his troops out of the camp and advanced towards the enemy's position.

The ground between the camp and the base of Talana Hill was of an open character, but the infantry, taking advantage of every variety of cover, managed to cross this space with only slight loss.

Leading his men gallantly himself, Sir William directed a fierce attack upon the hill, and was almost immediately mortally wounded. The infantry swept on, covered as far as possible by artillery, the men with the utmost resolution climbed the steep rocks on hands and knees, and, by one o'clock, had reached the crest and put the enemy to flight. About 500 Boers were killed and wounded; while the British losses

amounted to 10 officers and 31 non-commissioned officers and men killed ; 20 officers and 160 non-commissioned officers and men wounded ; and 9 officers and 211 non-commissioned officers and men missing.

The last item needs some explanation. The 18th Hussars were ordered to move round the enemy's right flank, and be ready to cut off his retreat. In doing so they came in contact with General Joubert's column, were surrounded, taken prisoner, and forthwith despatched to Pretoria. This was a great damper on what at the time seemed to be a notable victory.

Undaunted by his rebuff, General Joubert came steadily on, and General Yule, who succeeded Symons in command, saw that his position was becoming precarious. He communicated the fact to Sir George White at Ladysmith, and it was arranged that he should withdraw to that town as soon as possible.

In the meantime the Boers had developed such surprising mobility, that Sir George White discovered them in the neighbourhood of Ladysmith itself. His cavalry patrols found them at Elandslaagte, clustered round the railway station. On the very day after the battle of Glencoe, there-

fore, the Commander-in-chief ordered General French, commanding the cavalry of the Natal force, to move out with a strong body of cavalry and artillery, followed by infantry. Thus was brought about the desperate battle of Elandslaagte, fought on October 21st.

General French had only arrived from England two days before, and at once commenced that career of almost uninterrupted success which has distinguished him above all the other leaders in the war.

It was a drizzly, misty morning. The advance guard very soon came in touch with the enemy. Coming upon the edge of a cliff, they could see the Boers gathered round the station and settlement of Elandslaagte, and General French at once opened artillery fire upon them. The Boers replied with great accuracy, though again their shells did not burst, but merely buried themselves in the ground; and then General French could see large bodies of mounted men coming up, apparently in support of the force he was attacking.

Deeming it unadvisable to proceed further without reinforcements, he communicated by telephone with Sir George White, and received in return a

squadron of the 5th Dragoon Guards, a squadron of the 5th Lancers, the 21st and 41st Batteries of the Royal Field Artillery, the 1st Battalion of the Devonshire Regiment, and five companies of the Gordon Highlanders. More artillery fighting took place, until at length the enemy's guns appeared to be silenced.

There was not much daylight left, but General French decided to push his attack home. Again there were ridges to be scaled, and rocks to be climbed, but our men, led with the utmost bravery by their officers, headed forward in spite of the fact that by this time the enemy had been reinforced by the German contingent, who occupied a strong position upon a horseshoe ridge.

One incident is recorded by Sir George White in his official despatch, which afterwards was frequently repeated. "Many of the Boers," he wrote, "remained lying down, shooting from behind stones until our men were within twenty or thirty yards of them, and then sometimes ran for it, and sometimes stood up and surrendered. These latter were never harmed, although just before their capture they had probably shot down several of our officers and men."

Another still more disquieting and dishonour-

able incident is also recorded, namely the abuse of the white flag. Colonel Hamilton, on seeing this sacred emblem exhibited from the centre of the Boer camp, ordered the "cease fire" to be sounded.

For a few moments there was a complete lull in the action. Then a single shot was heard, which was followed by a deadly fire from a small conical kopje, and by a determined charge up the hill by some thirty or forty Boers. Our men fell back for a moment before the fierce suddenness of this attack, but only for a moment. Reinforced by Devonshires, they charged back, cheering, to the crest of the hill, when the remnant of the Boer forces fled in confusion towards the north.

The British troops had gained a conspicuous success, practically annihilating the whole of the Johannesburg commando. Many Boers of importance were killed, the whole of the enemy's camp was taken, and the burghers were thoroughly dispersed. It was a hardly contested fight; the Boer losses were estimated at over 100 killed, 108 wounded, and 188 prisoners; and they also lost two guns. Our casualties consisted of 4 officers and 37 men killed, 31 officers and 175 wounded, and 10 men missing.

This victory, though so dearly bought, had the happiest consequences. General Yule started on the 22nd for Ladysmith, leaving his sick and wounded behind. It was almost a forlorn venture, and would have been utterly so but for the battle of Elandslaagte. Even, however, after that crushing defeat had been inflicted on the enemy, who invested the country between Glencoe and Ladysmith, the task which General Yule set himself was hazardous in the extreme.

Sir George White, perceiving this risk, moved out again on October 24th and engaged the enemy at Rietfontein, with a view to covering General Yule's flank. His object was attained with entire success, although with a loss of one British officer and eleven men killed, six officers and ninety-seven men wounded, and two missing.

General Yule's column, after a march which will live as one of the most remarkable in military history, arrived at Ladysmith on October 25th without the loss of a man.

From this point the course of the campaign was entirely dominated by the original decision to attempt to hold a large part of north Natal. In little more than a week the Boers had completely invested Ladysmith, isolating the large

force of eight thousand men under the command of Sir George White and General Yule, and, of course, closing communications with the south of Natal.

What is known as the siege of Ladysmith actually commenced sometime later; but there is no doubt that immediately after General Yule had joined hands with Sir George White the two were rendered absolutely ineffective for driving out the invaders.

Their position was unenviable, but by no means desperate. The camp had been skilfully entrenched, and contained abundance of ammunition and provisions, while the Klip River assured to the besieged an ample supply of water. Still, it is hardly congenial to the British spirit to be hemmed in and rendered helpless for any lengthened period, and almost from the day the investment began General White was unceasing in his efforts to injure the enemy, and to break loose from him. Disastrous results followed upon one such effort, however, on the last day of October.

Colonel Carleton, with Gloucesters, Royal Irish Fusiliers, and a Mountain Battery, had been ordered out by night, with the view of turning

the enemy's right flank. This was part of a movement which was soundly enough conceived, but which ended in a terrible reverse. While Colonel Carleton was making his way over a ridge called Nicholson's Nek, some boulders fell, or were thrown, from the heights above, and frightened the mules that were carrying the whole of the gun equipment, and the greater part of the small-arm ammunition. The animals stampeded, and in a very few moments the whole force found itself left defenceless, except for the cartridges the soldiers carried with them.

Not only was the force defenceless, but it seems to have been thrown into a state of semi-panic. The men were standing on a flat kopje, situated among other kopjes which dominated it. Realising the desperate nature of their position, the men rallied, and commenced building breast-works with such boulders as were not too large to move.

They had only partially succeeded in protecting themselves, when the enemy appeared in great force. It is not difficult to imagine the scene that followed. It was pitch dark; our men had very soon discharged their last cartridge, and there was nothing left but to face the Boers with the

bayonet, and with the grim determination to sell their lives as dearly as possible.

But now occurred perhaps the most singular incident of that dreadful night. Some one was heard to give the order to "cease fire." Whether it was done by one of our officers under the impression that nearly all the brave little band had been slain, and that, there being no more ammunition, further resistance was useless; or whether, as is not improbable, the order was shouted by some one among the enemy, in pursuance of a trick by which, in this campaign, the Dutchmen have won several advantages over us, will never be known; but, at all events, this fine body of men fell hopelessly into the hands of the enemy.

They sold their lives and liberty dearly, but they suffered complete annihilation as a fighting body, and, in addition to a number of casualties, no fewer than eight hundred and seventy officers and men were taken prisoner.

In reporting this reverse, Sir George White gave an example of chivalrous acceptance of responsibility, which deserves to be especially recorded. He telegraphed, "I formed the plan in carrying out which the disaster occurred, and

am alone responsible for that plan. No blame whatever attaches to the troops, as the position was untenable."

These were assuredly the words of a brave man, and they earned for him the sympathy of the entire nation. It was a sad blow, both to our material power and to our prestige, but, fortunately, Sir George White was able to assure us that it in no way affected the course of the campaign, or lessened the security of Ladysmith.

Then the lines of investment were drawn closer and tighter than ever round the town. The Boers posted heavy guns on all the hills surrounding the extensive plain upon which Ladysmith stands, and where the camp was formed, and occupied in strong force all the valleys between them.

The greatest anxiety prevailed in England as to whether or not Sir George White could hold out until Sir Redvers Buller and his reinforcements could arrive. It so happened that General Buller landed at Capetown on the very day of the Nicholson's Nek disaster. He received the news as he stepped ashore, and probably at that moment he made up his mind that the relief of Ladysmith was a matter of the first necessity.

We can understand now how disastrously the original military blunder made in northern Natal continued persistently to make its evil effects felt, just as ripples spread in ever-widening circles round the stone cast into a pool. The arrival of the Army Corps was now the one thing to look for, and everybody was asking, "what will General Buller do with it?"

It was understood that Buller's plan was to take his troops northwards through Cape Colony, and invade the Orange Free State. Had this plan been followed, it would probably have paralysed the enemy, and led to the shortening of the campaign. But General Buller felt certain that the situation in Natal was intolerable; that the first thing to do was to relieve Ladysmith; and that, for the present at all events, the original plan of campaign must be abandoned.

It will thus be seen how the initial mistake made in Natal has affected the whole of the war ever since. General Buller ordered the transports to Durban, and poured his troops into that port, himself following in due time. Altogether, sixteen thousand men were diverted to Natal. General Gatacre took a strong force to Queenstown, and the remainder, under Lord Methuen, were

despatched to the relief of Kimberley, which was already closely besieged.

Thus three campaigns were developed instead of one, and the British forces were divided between Natal, the northern frontier of Cape Colony, and the western border of the Orange Free State. From a strategical point of view nothing could have been worse, and, although all went well for a few days, the country was soon to learn with bitterness that a fatal error had been committed, the effects of which would be felt throughout the whole struggle.

With Buller's arrival in Natal, the hopes both of the army and the nation rose considerably. There were some regrettable incidents round Ladysmith, such as the destruction of a British armoured train near Chieveley; the depredations of the Boers along the banks of the Tugela River; the isolation of Estcourt, and so forth. On the other hand, General Hildyard, on the 23rd of November, fought a successful action at Willow Grange against more than seven thousand Boers, commanded by Joubert in person.

General Buller reported that this action resulted in a strategical success of the greatest value, and it was purchased at no considerable loss

of life. At the same time General White found it utterly hopeless to endeavour to break through the Boer line, suffered from a daily bombardment, and was greatly troubled by increasing sickness, both among the soldiers and civilians, in the camp and town.

The relief of Ladysmith became urgently necessary, and every one anxiously looked forward to some decisive action by Buller. Two days after the affair at Willow Grange Sir Redvers arrived at Frere, about twelve miles south of the town of Colenso on the Tugela. The Boers had destroyed the bridges over this important river, and had entrenched themselves on the steep and stony sides forming the north bank. The problem before Buller was how to cross the river, and break down the Boer investing lines round Ladysmith. This was the work which he took in hand immediately on his arrival.

By the middle of December his preparations began to near completion, but dark days were in store for us just then. This was the week which saw the frightful disaster to Gatacre's army at Stormberg, and the repulse of Lord Methuen at Maaghersfontein. The trilogy of disaster was soon to be completed by the failure of General Buller at Colenso.

On the 15th of December he delivered his blow, but the position was found impregnable; our men were shot down by hundreds by an invisible enemy; many were drowned in the stream; the artillery came within rifle range, and had all its horses, and nearly all its men, killed or wounded; and, after a stubborn fight, in which we lost eleven hundred men wounded or prisoners, the order was given to retire. Buller reported that no troops could live in the open against such murderous fire.

Eight of our guns were abandoned, and General Buller's first attempt to relieve Ladysmith had failed, and failed utterly.

The Government at home now woke up to the critical nature and requirements of the situation. Lord Roberts was asked to take the chief command in South Africa, and consented. Lord Kitchener was appointed his chief of the staff. He was then at Khartoum, but he straightway started for the scene of action, and joined Lord Roberts at Gibraltar. Another army corps was ordered to be mobilised; more reserves were called out; other bodies of men were raised from the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers; our Colonies promised further contingents; and the whole Empire awoke to its responsibilities.

By the end of the year the forces raised for purposes of war numbered no fewer than one hundred and twenty thousand men, and forty thousand more were added before many weeks had passed.

General Buller, after his reverse, rested his men and waited for reinforcements. Meanwhile he got into heliographic communication with General White, who reported, at the beginning of January, that he was very hard pressed. The Boers had made a terrific assault upon him, and had only been repelled after nearly seventeen hours' fighting.

Some of the entrenchments on Waggon Hill were three times carried, and as often retaken by our troops. The enemy was finally repulsed and driven out of our positions at the point of the bayonet. Clearly Buller must strike quickly, and strike hard, if Ladysmith was to be saved.

His reinforcements, under Sir Charles Warren, duly arrived, and he had been strengthened in artillery.

At last the cheering news came from his head-quarters, on the 17th of January, that he had crossed the Tugela, practically without opposition, and occupied a strong position on the northern bank.

Several subsidiary actions followed, in which Lord Dundonald's mounted men, General Clery with a part of Warren's force, and General Lyttelton were engaged. The Boers evacuated their trenches, and they were occupied by the British. On the night of Tuesday, January 23rd, Sir Charles Warren captured an important hill known as Spion Kop, which was believed to dominate the Boer position. In fact, General Buller telegraphed—"Warren is of opinion that he has rendered the Boer position untenable."

There were heavy losses in these operations—mostly in wounded—but it was felt that a very sensible advance had been made towards the great object in view. What, therefore, was the dismay of the public when it learned on the following day that Spion Kop, which had been wrested from the Boers at so heavy a cost, had been abandoned. The fact was that the Boers poured upon it so terrific an artillery fire that no troops could stay there and live.

Then came the still more disquieting and bewildering intelligence that Buller had re-crossed the Tugela and established himself in the camp he had occupied a month before. His second attempt to relieve Ladysmith, like the first, had failed.

A third move was made on February 5th. This time, Buller tried a double movement. On the front of the position a feint was made, while on the extreme right General Lyttelton's Brigade effected the passage of the river, surprised the enemy, and captured a hill forming part of the Brakfontein Range. Here again, however, as at Spion Kop, the gain proved to be illusory, and once more, on the 8th of February, Buller retired across the Tugela.

It was impossible, he said, to entrench himself on the north bank, owing to the nature of the ground. He spent two days in trying to do so, but merely found that he was exposing his men to heavy guns fired from positions by which the British artillery was dominated. The third attempt had failed also.

CHAPTER VIII

AT THE BRITISH GENERAL'S HEADQUARTERS

ALL who were at De Aar early in November 1899, felt that they were occupying ground which was soon to become historic. Battles come more or less as lightning strikes, but in this case the great treasury of military stores which was accumulating there necessitated a concentration of force at this point, and such a combination must sooner or later attract the enemy.

This was not the sort of fighting-ground he is wont to choose, for we were in a wide level basin, whose hilly walls are very low and smooth, but we felt that he must come, because we menaced his frontier sixty miles away, and tempted him with such an amount of stores, guns, and ammunition as would enable him to prolong his warfare at least two months longer than his own resources would permit.

Every day that the Boers still delayed our camp grew stronger, though this was not the case before General Buller arrived at the Cape. Until then we had only the second battalion of the Yorkshire Light Infantry to protect half a million pounds' worth of stores, but within forty-eight hours a battery and a half of artillery had arrived from England, to be followed by another half-battery from the Orange River.

Rumours of Boers in the neighbourhood, or crossing the river at various points, caused the officers to sleep in their boots at times, but all now felt better prepared, and even stories of attacks on the railway between us and the Cape caused only a thrill of pleasurable anticipation.

The British base of supplies was at Stellenbosch, near Capetown, with De Aar as the advanced post. The two formed, as it were, an arm, with the elbow at the Cape and the wrist at De Aar. In time, as the army pushed forward, it was proposed to build other advance posts farther north, and spread apart like the opened fingers of a hand. It was of intense interest to see a great post like this—a mushroom military capital—spring up much faster than weeds ever grow.

Five weeks before this was a village of some forty

houses, two general merchandise shops, a church or two, a school, and a railway men's institute, or club-house. It had now become a railway junction where the trains from the Cape were broken up to reach the Natal coast on the east, and the Orange River, Johannesburg, &c., on the north. The villagers were the railway employés. All around the little bunch of cottages reached a great level desert plain tufted with wild sage. Large, smooth, table-topped kopjes enclosed the plain on the north-east and east, and low, sharp-edged hills made its western walls.

A fortnight after war had begun some officers of engineers received orders to make a camp here, and put up buildings for ammunition and stores. They found a railway pointsman's iron-roofed cottage, and some sheep at pasture, where they determined to begin work. The pointsman's house became the mess, or dining-room, of the officers. Fastidious as many are at home, they now put up with enamelled iron plates, sat on stools and soap-boxes, and fared upon army rations of so much meat, so much bread, such a weight of potatoes, and so much mustard, pepper, and salt apiece. For glasses they had enamelled iron mugs, and their knives and forks would cost twopence or threepence each in London.

Where they found the sheep at pasture there sprang up a canvas camp, three or four large store tents such as circus side-shows use in England, and a number of large wooden buildings framed with corrugated iron, and filled with food for men and horses, ammunition, and the essentials of warfare and soldier existence. Planted on the pasture, too, was a great kraal full of new transport waggons, carts, and carriages—by the hundred.

A week after the engineers began work Captain Mackenzie, of the Royal Artillery, who had been in the Free State buying horses, had orders to set up a remount office at this place for the purchase of horses and mules, and to establish a kraal for the animals. He bought, or leased, a piece of ground to accommodate a hundred beasts. Ever since then he had been leasing more and more land, until his camp kraals extended for at least a mile.

An outer kraal had been established in the near distance, and he had already a thousand or more mules, and hundreds of horses, while strings of valuable beasts were coming in every day. Next to his Remount Camp was the Army Service Camp, and next to that the Medical Camp, with its Red Cross flag flapping from a pole. On the other side of the railway were the quarters of the

Royal Engineers, the Artillery, and the Yorkshire Regiment. Far off, behind everything else, stretched the largest of these canvas villages—the Kaffir camp, where live the Kaffirs, Cape boys, and Basutos who are clothed, fed, housed, and paid so highly for their work as mule drivers and transport men.

Scattered about in and between these camps were new iron-sheathed storehouses, and the bowery enclosure which holds the cottage chosen for the British General's headquarters. This juts out into the desert tract, a refreshing green oasis, whose air is cooled by the shade of many trees, and scented by the perfume of honeysuckle.

The rapid and masterly construction of store-sheds was a source of constant interest and wonder to us civilians. On one morning we saw men laying a lot of floor timbers on the ground. By nightfall the framework of a building had sprung up around the beams, and in twenty-four hours men were sheathing the framework with iron, while others were building inner walls, with counters, lockers, and shelves complete. In this way, as by magic, we came upon a soldiers' canteen or a fifty feet storehouse, across a path over which we had walked to the village on the previous day.

Most men know the extreme importance of the Army Service Corps in modern military affairs. In the Omdurman campaign, for instance, Lord Kitchener's genius was shown in the use he made of this body, and of the Engineers and Ordnance Corps. He was thus enabled to carry an army perpetually equipped, and wanting nothing, straight to the battlefield, where the combatant force did its decisive work in a day.

Everything seemed to promise that the work in this Boer campaign would be the same, as one began to realise what a perfectly complete organisation is this Army Service Corps, in which every private has a trade and is skilled at it. Here were carpenters, builders, railway clerks, smiths, wheelwrights, harness makers, joiners—every sort of mechanic and workman. They were up at bugle call at daybreak, and worked like beavers until six o'clock in the evening. They could make you a waggon, or a saddle, or a cabinet ; I almost think they could mend a watch, or build a bicycle.

They are trained to run a railway after the engineers have built it, and we had the Ordnance Corps here to supply clothing and arms, the medical men for doctors, the engineers for sanitation, and all of them together as warriors. In a

word, De Aar was a complete city except for jewellers, milliners, and dressmakers, and if it was to be permanent we had the means to turn its canvas tents into stone houses, and its desert trails into paved streets.

All this was the civil aspect of the camp as a base of supplies. But the military who ruled and guarded it were quite as active. They had dotted the hills with breastworks, thrown up redoubts of earth or stone or provender boxes on the plain, and spent their own busy days in drilling, gun firing, and hill climbing, while our corps of scouts had been ranging all over the adjacent country.

Meantime our natives had been invaluable. They had fed and groomed the horses, and trained the mules in ten-span teams to drag the heavy transport waggons up and down the roads in clouds of dust from morning until night. Cape-town at night is a most exciting city. De Aar by day and night was almost as exciting, and a thousand times more novel.

CHAPTER IX

THE SITUATION AT DE AAR

VERY striking was the extreme youth of De Aar, this important point in the military programme of the war, and its amazing growth. What was desert ground, harbouring a few sheep, less than five weeks before, rapidly became the seat of five camps surrounding half a million pounds' worth of stores. How it would spread, how it would look, what would be its insurable value, inside of three weeks, when tens of thousands of troops were there, the mind hesitated to picture, or even to surmise.

At first it was quite common to hear casual remarks by officers to the effect that artillery were needed here, and that perfect protection required mounted infantry. Such comments were so often made that, as soon as the value of the stores was estimated at half a million pounds I took the

trouble to inquire exactly what protection the camp enjoyed, and found that of regular troops there were none but the 2nd Battalion (Col. Barter's) King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, numbering about eight hundred men.

There were two guns—one a muzzle-loader, and one a Hotchkiss—which were intended for Kimberley, but were stopped here because Kimberley was cut off from communication. To be sure there were the men of the Army Service Corps and of the Royal Engineers, numbering 125 more combatants, making less than a thousand fighting men in all, with two guns. In other words, until four days ago, one thousand men here were under sentence of death, or ignominious surrender, whenever the Boers should have chosen to deliver judgment.

Fancy a capital "O" split apart at the top and bottom. Fancy the letter made by hills, and the space between a wide, long, level tract of sage-brush and sand, with the Cape lying at the further end of hundreds of miles of desert. Fancy the Orange River sixty miles away, with two thousand five hundred men holding the bridge over it, and a battalion of one thousand men broken into five bodies of troops isolated at as many points—all,

except the force at the Orange River, inviting certain destruction. Remember, too, that not only the Boers of the Free State and the Transvaal were to be feared, for we were in an enemy's country, to all intents and purposes. This is the Cape Colony of Great Britain ; but it is, in the spirit of the majority of its inhabitants, not to be likened, thank Heaven, to any other of her Majesty's colonies.

Were the hills around De Aar held by our troops and fortified ? The farthest ones—to the eastward—were. The nearer ones, dominated by a magnificent elevation from which shot could have been fired into this camp from mediæval guns of wood, were left open to any who might choose to take and intrench them. This, then, was the predicament of De Aar at the beginning of the Boer rebellion. Every man there daily expected attack, and no one but the Omniscient Ruler of all destinies can conceive why an attack was not made.

As time went on, however, the situation improved. General Sir Redvers Buller's arrival at Capetown was followed by the abandonment of Colesburg and Naauwpoort, two of the many villages in which small forces had been kept at

the mercy of the Boers. The concentration of these troops at this point immediately succeeded, and we gained a battery and a half (nine guns of the latest pattern), and four hundred men of the Berkshire Regiment.

Major-General Wood of the Engineers, arrived at about the same time, and instantly the commanding hills to the west, closely overlooking the camp, bristled with men digging entrenchments and erecting defences for rifle fire and guns.

These opportune changes distinctly encouraged the brave fellows entrusted with the care and accumulation of stores for the many regiments which were to come, and which were to advance from here for the prompt settlement of this war.

At least two thousand strong in combatant force, we had something like a dozen guns, with the hills fortified and manned by day and night. We formed redoubts of earth, of forage, and of biscuit boxes, as well as many trenches on the level ground between the hills. We could sleep with the consciousness that we were able to make a stiff opposition to the enemy, though we still needed mounted infantry. If we had such a force, and three thousand more fighting men, we might have the sweeter assurance of not being compelled

to suffer very great slaughter, or submit to the necessity of surrendering these stores, which would prolong the war against us for weeks were they to fall into the enemy's hands. Thus we were thankful for many things, among them being the knowledge that the precarious past was gone by, that the Boers had missed their best chance, and that we could give a good account of ourselves when those hovering round should call us into battle.

We had another change which chimed in well with the improvement of our defences—we were put under martial law. What this form of government entails will be understood from the following copy of the regulations posted up at the station and the post-office :—

1. Martial law has been proclaimed in De Aar. The following camp regulations will come into immediate operation.

2. No person is allowed to remain in or to quit De Aar without a permit signed by the magistrate, and countersigned by the camp commandant.

3. The permits for railway officials [this is a railway centre] will be signed and issued by the heads of the traffic, loco. and engineering departments; for postal officials by the head of that department.

4. Any person found selling intoxicating liquor to a soldier, or to a native or coloured person, will be immediately apprehended, and the whole of his goods seized.

5. The sale of intoxicating liquor to others can only take place between the hours of 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. This includes the sale of liquor to persons staying in any hotel or boarding-house in De Aar.

6. Every person keeping house or a boarding-house, or receiving any one into his private house to stay for one night or more, is required to obtain the permission of the camp commandant before doing so.

7. No person other than railway and postal officials will be allowed, without a special pass, out of their houses after half-past 9 p.m.

8. Any person infringing these regulations will be dealt with by martial law.

This proclamation was ordered by the Major-General commanding, and thus a very necessary change, tending to exclude Boer sympathisers from the camp, also dated from the arrival of General Buller and the instalment here of Major-General Wood.

CHAPTER X

HEADQUARTERS DURING A BATTLE

THE very mechanical routine of life at an advance post like De Aar, where a few troops simply hold stores for others who are to come, grows almost as tiresome as watching the sails of a windmill for days at a time. So I ran down to Orange River, sixty miles, and was rewarded by scenting the first aroma of battle on this side of the seat of war.

My idea was simply to see this outpost on the frontier, to walk over into the enemy's country if possible, and to compass the place in my mind's eye, in order to understand whatever might happen there in days to come.

A friend who knew Colonel the Hon. G. H. Gough went with me early in November to pay his respects to the commandant. The same veldt reaches all the way from De Aar to the river—

a plain littered with tufts of wild sage and pimpled with hills, some large as forty Olympias in a row, and cut off flat on their tops; others mere bosoms of the plain, smooth and gracefully rounded. But the sage grew greener and greener, and there was grass in places, varied by occasional oases of little light-green trees surrounding a farmhouse, or an artificial pond fed by a Yankee wind pump.

Field rats and mice, lizards, chameleons, and an occasional large bird scuttled out of sight; frequent ant-hills, two or three feet high and half as thick, dotted the veldt with their brick-red colour, and we saw a few stately ostriches, and many herds of goats, sheep, and horses. Of human inhabitants there were only tiny clusters at the far-separated stations. Silence, desolation, vastness, and colour —these were the dominant notes of the region.

Not many weeks before, Orange River consisted of a few railway buildings, and six or eight small stone cottages roofed with corrugated iron—the homes of the railway people. It may have had a fixed population of fifty souls. Now 2,650 soldiers and half as many more servants, drivers, transport hands, and camp followers made the little village swarm and hum with life. The

station platform was crowded by soldiers, armed and in full marching order, hung all about with heavy weights, like hooks in a crowded butcher's shop.

It is indeed a marvel that Englishmen can go about so buttoned up, and strapped in, and burdened with equipage, in the intense heat of these latitudes.

Leaving the station we saw tents pitched along one side of the only street, and other tents standing in the humorous little front gardens, where plants and flowers are kept in paraffin and biscuit tins, as though the people expected to move at short notice, and carry their gardens with them.

The horses of the officers were tethered to the front fences, and in the middle of the street was a group of soldiers working a heliograph—a mirror, like a shaving-glass, set up on a tripod, and trembling with the deft touches that one soldier gave to a telegraph key, the while another soldier read to him from a sheet of paper.

Little did we suspect that, as we watched that mirror, it was communicating the orders of General Wood to a British force at that moment

entering into an engagement with the Boers twenty miles away.

Having seen the town we inquired for Colonel Gough, and learned that he was out with a patrol across the river, and would return in an hour. We knew that earlier in the week a small force had been riding in a south-easterly direction in the enemy's country, and had returned quickly without an adventure. So, there being nothing new in this situation, we sat down to await the return of the seven hundred Lancers and others who were under Colonel Gough.

It was one o'clock in the afternoon, and we had been smoking and chatting with new military acquaintances for an hour or so, when we noticed a group of Tommies standing behind two officers, who were scanning the distant veldt with field glasses. Going into the street to see what they were looking at, we discovered that of the few persons to be seen every one was facing and scanning the red-hot veldt—even the Kaffirs and their women and children being outside their huts in the foreground, with their palms up to shield their eyes. Of soldiers there were not twenty within sight. What did it mean? What had happened to depopulate a swarming village in an hour?

It was the hostler to Captain Wright, the local correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, who answered the question—perhaps with exaggeration, yet in such a manner as to show that no time was to be lost by any energetic man at the scene. "We have heard that the patrol is cut off by a large force of Boers," said he, "and every man-jack in the place—field batteries, infantry, and all—has gone to their relief in the train."

"When did the patrol start out?"

"Yesterday, sir. They're at Belmont, now, twenty miles away. I wish I was with them. God send that they'll give the Dutch what they're in need of."

"Where is Major-General Wood, to give us permission to hurry after the troops?"

"In the station, sir."

And there we found him—a small, well-knit, wiry man of apparently sixty, black haired, slightly bald, swarthy, alone in the dining-room, with his sword and belt flung upon a table, a thousand flies inspecting it, his head held down in thought, his visage that of a man preoccupied and anxious.

"I'd rather you'd see Colonel Money," said he; "he is acting commandant in Colonel Gough's absence."

In a tiny stone cottage with "Staff Office" on a painted board before it, we found Colonel Money, of the "Fighting Fifth" (Northumberland Fusiliers), who have been under canvas two years, and have seen Gibraltar, Omdurman, Crete, and Aldershot, yet have known the comforts of a bed at night for only two weeks since 1897.

We saw him in what was somebody's bedroom only a few weeks before, sitting at a table made of planks laid upon wooden trestles, and in three minutes we were trudging along the railway to the river. The fringe of bright green trees, like willows at home, showed us where it was, a mile and a half away, but the route was between hills on and around all of which were white tents, or camps, upon the veldt. On one hill a man was wig-wagging with flags, on another a "helio" was making microscopic lightning flashes, on another men in khaki lounged among rocks scarcely more plentiful than themselves.

At last the land fell away, and a great iron bridge, painted red, took the place of the railway. When the river is swollen this great bridge is doubtless needed to span it, but now two-thirds of its length arched a field of dry caked mud, from which on all sides sprang a myriad trees and

bushes. A sentinel on foot, backed by many men lounging near, demanded our passes, and permitted us to continue across the bridge, once but partially floored with open trestle work, but now covered with planks for the passage of troops.

From its middle we were able to look up and down the historic Orange River. The water in it was not above 75 feet wide, and looked very shallow. In character it was like the Missouri or Lower Mississippi, bordered by a wide, dry bed, cut up by little islands and sand-bars, and fretted by upturned trees, snags, and sun-baked *débris*. Far off to the west its banks came closer together, and were so clothed with green that for a moment we drank in that view, and thought of the Thames at Wargrave.

At the far end of the red series of trusses a corporal and squad of men suddenly materialised, and demanded our passes very much as if we had not passed through the other end of the bridge, but had been born in the middle of it, and had stayed there till we grew to formidable proportions.

Before us, instead of the veldt, were some considerable hills, so stony as to appear like huge heaps of black boulders, with the shining metals

of the railway dodging between and around them.

"Go up on that hill," said the corporal, "and, maybe, you will see the fighting. I wish to goodness I was in the middle of it, instead of being stuck here like a cast-off shoe!"

We passed out of the tunnel of red iron framework, and on both sides of us were men of the Fusiliers and the Munsters, alert, rifles in hand, peering between the rocks and bushes, and ready to give and take the sharp medicine of war.

CHAPTER XI

BATTLE CONDITIONS ON THE VELDT

THE force in the field was simply a patrol of seven hundred men, composed of Mounted Infantry of the Royal Munster Fusiliers, the Northumberland Fusiliers, and the North Lancashire Regiment, acting with the 9th Lancers. These were under the command of Colonel Gough, and had been out in the enemy's country thirty hours when news reached this post that they were attacking a Boer commando.

I crossed the Orange River and climbed the highest kopje, to find that its sides were covered with troops. At the top stood three officers and a dozen men, all silent, all staring over the veldt which lay stretched beneath and before them five hundred feet below, fifteen miles to some eastern hills, and interminably level to the westward. They were listening as well as

looking, hoping to hear the low mutter of the guns of the Boers answered by their comrades wherever they might be.

The crest was battlemented by boulders as high as a man's breast, and all along the top of the wall were dirty canvas bags filled with sand. The officers used field glasses. The soldiers strained their eyes. In a few whispered words I was made to understand that Colonel Gough's patrol force was supposed to be on the other side of a pass plainly visible to the north-eastward, and that the armoured train, and other railway trains, had taken to his relief practically all the artillery and infantry that he had left behind at the post.

All on the redoubt were now scanning the rough veldt and its enclosing hills for signs of our own forces, or of possible Boer commandoes concentrating for an attack on the post, that is to say the Orange River bridge, behind us.

The officer in command of the redoubt was Major Hall, of the Royal Munster Fusiliers, and a finer picture of the swell, the gentleman, and the soldier I have never seen. His uniform of khaki was new, from his helmet to the creaseless leather putties which seemed moulded to his legs.

It all fitted him to perfection, and every star

and button and buckle shone like fine jewellery. His face was refined, intellectual, masterful, and his every movement, graceful to a degree, showed him as much at his ease on that redoubt as in a West-end drawing room at home. Indeed, with his moustachios upturned at the ends, and his face and hands browned but daintily cared for, he might have been carried to London on a magic carpet, manifesting there as he did in war, "the glass of fashion and the mould of form."

Now he leaned on the parapet, now he sat upon it, now he slid over it and leaned his back against it, but all the time he scanned the field or received or sent despatches through an urchin-faced orderly of seventeen, who was himself a keen soldier to the core.

The officers with the major were but a trifle less spick and span than their chief. The soldiers were what one would expect who knows the dust they had marched through, the rocks they had lain among—the exigencies of their routine of living sixteen in one tent.

Sweeping the field with my glasses I discovered —only by intense concentration—that a distant hill was crowded with our men in khaki, and first saw such of their horses as were white or extra

dark. Their cannon—three of which were with them and painted light brown—were not visible, so wonderfully does the khaki colour merge into the tints of the sun-browned veldt.

While I ranged the valley or plain with my glasses something slipped and stumbled heavily over the loose stones behind me. I turned, thinking to dodge or help a stumbling man, and found myself staring into the great brown eyes of an ostrich 6ft. tall, and with legs almost as thick as, and longer than, my own.

"He came up here some days ago," said a soldier, "and he always stays here now. We feed him and fool with him, and he seems very happy."

The ostrich stalked past me, and took a position between the major and the captain, where, after appearing to observe that they were very busy scanning the landscape, he too stared at the plain, and remained erect and watchful, the highest typification of a sentry in appearance. He marred this fine effect for just a moment by seizing and swallowing a box of safety matches. After that he continued his sentry duty with a gleam of satisfaction in his eyes.

We saw but little to reward us, and nothing to

put us more upon our guard, if such a thing were possible, than at the beginning. What most interested me were the phenomena and illusions which are begotten by the atmosphere here upon the veldt where this war is to be fought out.

Thus, every now and then a great cloud of whitish dust would breed upon the surface of the plain, and send a streaming tail of what looked like vapour turning in a funnel-formed cloud toward the sky, or reaching far away in the wind. These sudden apparitions attracted close scrutiny, but in every instance they proved to be clouds of dust raised by moving flocks of sheep.

Again the form of a swift riding horseman would appear afar, and seem to dart along the veldt. It was sure to be in truth an ostrich stalking with stately slowness. And the reverse of this was equally true, for a man in black clothing mounted on a grey horse had all the appearance of a supernatural bird. The rider's body cut the horse's form across, leaving two whitish ends visible, and when the horse galloped these parts of the animal rose and fell like wings.

The surface of the veldt looked level, yet it was so far from that as to cause a body of our troops at one time, and at another time a railway

train, to disappear suddenly, though the surface seemed flat all around them. They vanished at a few miles' distance, and though we imagined ourselves able to look down upon the whole plain, their further progress entirely was hidden from our view.

Night began to fall, and we returned to the town. The trains presently came back with the men. From the first one was lifted the body of Lieut.-Colonel Keith Falconer, and then the dying form of Captain Wood. Four more wounded men—two privates and two officers—were in the throng, and a hush fell upon the post. Thus we had our first taste of war on this side of the enemy's country, our first sight of the shedding of heroic blood. Here, as elsewhere, we found that the Boers were indulging in illicit, savage warfare, singling out officers in order to cripple us.

"They will not play the game fairly," said a soldier, when the news came in that three officers and only two privates were shot.

In the camp during the next day much that was interesting was said about the means which must be taken to give our officers a reasonable measure of protection. Look at any reproduction of a photograph of British officers in khaki uniform

which has been published in the London weeklies, and you will see that their buttons, and golden insignia of rank, gleam like diamonds against their uniforms. As you see them in the pictures, the Boers see them in the blazing sunshine on the veldt.

"Tommy" has but few such points of metal, and these he is forbidden to polish. He must keep them dim. He must paint the sheath of his bayonet brown, and he may not even polish his boots. His rifle is his protection, just as the absence of a rifle marks an officer before the enemy.

It came under discussion to have all officers who march with their men provided with light carbines. In that case the swords, whose silver handles now gleam like electric lights on the field of battle, would be discarded, and so would the coloured collar bands and shoulder ornaments, which make such shining marks. Matters of this sort the Boer does not have to consider. He fights behind rocks, and except in the case of his blue-clad artillery he fights in his civilian dress.

The engagement near Belmont on November 10th was but a trifling skirmish, and will only figure in history as the first collision of opposing

troops on this side of the Dutch Republics. The purpose of the patrol was to discover the whereabouts and strength of the enemy in the region where they long ago blew up the railway. This was accomplished with bloodshed, only because the Boers disclosed their retreat by attacking our force.

CHAPTER XII

DUST AND KHAKI

IT sounds gruesome to liken the sending out of an army to the return of "dust to dust," and yet if the reader could see an army, or any number of soldiers, in khaki out on the veldt, he would at once think of the simile.

South Africa looks as if it were the dustbin of creation. Its ground is loose dust. Its air is flying dust. Its vegetation, animals, and insects nearly all take differing shades of dust colour.

On November 14th in the train from De Aar to Orange River I passed five miles of transports bringing up forage, food, and ammunition for Lord Methuen's advance column of ten thousand men—which it was hoped would sweep its way to the relief of Kimberley like a witch's broom.

All these waggons, mules, and negroes raised one long, high, dense cloud of reddish-brown dust,

through which we saw the canvas that covered the carts, the black faces of the natives, and such of the horses as were white or black. The waggons, which are all painted dust-colour, were lost to sight, and the half battalion of troops guarding the host we could not distinguish at all until we were almost beside them.

Like all the troops we have in the field, they began in uniforms of dirt-colour, and are constantly getting dirtier and dirtier. This does not sound like a proud or a pretty thing to say of her Majesty's valorous soldiers, but it is true ; it is so ordered, and it is good.

We were all getting dirtier and dirtier—inside and out. We breathed dust, drank dust, and ate dust. Very often we are out of sorts, because our internal arrangements suffer, and rebel against this new order of things ; but the dust persists, our systems bow to it, and we go ahead fitter than before.

Some of the natives, I believe, live on certain kinds of dirt, and have no bother about cooking and killing, and mowing and reaping. Perhaps if this war lasts long enough we shall simplify our affairs in the same way, for we are making great strides in that direction.

I sat in my dusty tent with my boots buried in dust, writing with a solution of dust by means of a dusty brown pen, and every line was dusted and dried as soon as written—as our grandfathers dried their manuscript with sand.

A dust-coloured cat strayed out on the veldt, and was watching a hole in the dust in order to catch a dust-coloured mouse. The air outside was as full of dust as your air in London is of smoke. The heat was intense, and all our throats were dry and caked with dust; yet, to relieve our thirst, we must drink Orange River water—which is so full of mud that when a servant pours it in the basin, we think he must have washed his own hands in it first without our having seen him do so.

This bit of descriptive comment on the field of war could be carried on indefinitely, to point the moral of the moment—which is the wonderful aptness and value of khaki for military uniforms in South Africa.

When we saw a little of it faring towards the Queen at St. Paul's on Diamond Jubilee Day we thought it very tidy and refreshing, mixed in with all the red and gold. It seems to have been only the Commander-in-chief of the American army

who realised its practical value, for he went home and dressed his soldiers in it, ready for the war with Spain. But when one sees the British Army here, in this dust-coloured canvas, one quickly realises that it ranks high among the advantages we possess over the Boers.

At distances where red or blue or black would be striking, khaki is not seen at all. It blends our men with the landscape so completely that in bright daylight, at short distances from the enemy, our forces almost gain the advantage of an army manœuvring at night.

We encouraged the men to allow their buttons to dull. We ordered them to paint their bayonet sheaths dust colour. Their kit-bags and water-bottles and all their belongings were khaki-coloured or matching it. Our big guns were painted like the ruddy earth, and our Maxims were wrapped in canvas great-coats of the universal hue. Our gun-carriages, limbers, great mule waggons, and small carts were all the same colour, and the water-tanks we dragged after the troops were indistinguishable from our other belongings.

We were within two or three days of beginning our start, and the regiments who were to swell our force were being rushed to us from England and

the Cape. What will they find their brothers in arms doing—these stalwart veterans who look so smart and dandified when we see them in Chelsea, or the barracks near Buckingham Palace? They will find them clothing themselves with dust and mud—nothing more or less.

Men might be seen dissolving mud in their pails, and dipping brushes in it to paint their white straps mud-colour. Every pouch and strap and cloth-covered water-bottle that would show white or dark underwent this treatment. And the drummers did the same with their drums—painting the white tightening cords with mud, muddying over the golden lions and unicorns and the gaudy regimental mottoes, so that everything should look like the veldt—so that we should be as dusty as our surroundings.

When the heroines of the Arabian Nights' tales watched from their palace roofs to see the clouds of dust that announced the coming of their husbands and lovers, they knew that out of those clouds would emerge figures in gaudy silks, or lustrous gold and silver. But here on the veldt, if the hapless heroines in Kimberley and Mafeking were watching for us who were in Lord Methuen's flying force, it would be different. They would

see the dust separate from the moving body beneath it, but what that body was their best glasses could not have told them until it was within a mile or two.

It might be no more than a troop of dust-coloured sheep moving in enormous bands upon the scorched veldt; it might be only a line of dust-hued farm waggons, or, if they were not mistaken, and looked at just the right time, lo! a dust-coated general and his staff, leading a myriad armed men, clothed and stained to match the colour of the ground.

While Tommy was thus wholly dull and dusty in tone, his officers differed from him, wearing shiny buttons, stars, crowns, and sword-hilts, and pipe-clayed belts and straps. In this difference has lain the danger of all in battle in this campaign, and from it has come the death of far too many. All alike recognise this, yet how differently they discuss the proposal that officers should dress like the men.

The Tommies were all in favour of the change, though it would greatly increase their own danger and losses. They were enthusiastic for having the officers doff swords, carry light carbines, and do away with their ornaments. They discussed the

mortality above the ranks with bated breath, as a thing altogether awful; and after one skirmish, where an officer was killed and two were wounded, I did not hear a Tommy speak of the two privates who died at the same time. Among officers the subject was differently treated. Some discussed the prospect of disguising themselves as if it were a thing to be considered only for the sake of deceiving an unfair foe, and gaining a point that way. Others indignantly spurned the idea as undignified and unworthy.

As brave a man as any is Major Rimington, head of the Imperial Corps of Guides.

"You may be sure," he said, "that the Boers will never know which are the officers and which the men in my troop. They'll all seem as like as so many peas."

He might better have said "as so many walnuts," for these guides—scouts in reality—were more like the veldt than are the red ant-hills which dot it all over. They were the most picturesque body in Lord Methuen's advance column—two hundred of them—all rough-riders and all beautifully mounted. Each man was obliged to speak Boer or Kaffir, and many speak both. Every one must be thoroughly well acquainted with some

part of the country around and before us. All carried carbines and pistols, and round each man's dust-brown slouch hat was bound a strip of striped fur, like the racoon skin of the early American trappers and later Texan rangers.

These men had been scouring the country literally for hundreds of square miles day and night while on duty at De Aar. Their pay is 5s. a day. The people of the region called them the "night cats," and their leader called them his "catch-em-alive-os." Two were Americans fresh from the Klondike, and their troop doctor was an American named Lindley, well known all over South Africa. The rest were all Afrikanders of English descent. Many had left the Transvaal and the Free State to side with the British. They liked their hard life, but prayed to be included in the fighting.

In their troop the officers were as dusty as the men, and therefore they best of all typified the dusty army that was to blend itself with the dusty veldt, except when its rifles and guns vomited the flames of battle.

CHAPTER XIII

BATTLE OF BELMONT

IT was on the southern and western sides of the Orange Free State that offensive warfare was begun by the British.

Like a tiger stalking its prey by night, in almost absolute silence, Lord Methuen's splendid flying column of nearly ten thousand men started from Belmont Farm at half-past three on the morning of the 23rd of November. The moonlight fell softened through fleecy clouds, and the battalions, marching in a long, narrow queue, hugged the nearer hills so as to be hidden in their shadow.

The army knew that the Boers held the greater range, which ran north and south to form the easterly wall of the four which enclose a noble but desolate valley.

Like a colossal centipede with twenty thousand legs, the column moved along the shadow of the

more friendly hills, crawling a few score yards, then halting, then crawling a little farther. At each halt all the officers and men sank upon one knee. The orders to march, to halt, to kneel, and to rise were given by movements of the hands of the commanders, no word being spoken.

Here and there a few men whispered now and then, but the light breeze which sifted through the wild sage of the veldt was louder than these hushed voices. Once, when we were leaving the hill shadows and crossing the corner of the valley to crouch for the deadly spring upon our foe, we came to a rocky patch, and our guns and ammunition waggons jolted and creaked among the obstacles, making our only noise, yet one which we felt the Boers must hear. The faint flush in the sky at the end of the Boer position told us that very soon they would also see us.

And now a golden rim was pushed above the farthest kopje; the wind-rumpled clouds that reached half across the plain took on the hue of blood—the look of curdled blood. The strange little birds called "dikkopfs," or thickheads, so abundant here, began their work of shooting up from the veldt twenty feet, and crying "Hui!" and dropping back again upon the ground. "Hui!

hui ! " sounded ever so sadly all over the parched desert, so soon to quaff the blood of hundreds.

At that moment we saw our valiant British moving in thin lines nearly two miles long. They looked like sportsmen stalking game, as each held his rifle ready in both hands, and all crouched as they strode along with frequent haltings. At that moment too there ran along the crest of the great southern kopje quick, vivid jets of fire, like jewels flashing in a coronet on the hills' brow. It was the flame of a volley from the Boers fired at the nearest British !

This was the beginning of a fearful fight, one of the severest that even English soldiers have ever faced. It fell to the lot of the Grenadier Guards to storm that particular hill. They saw the rim of fire beads flash along the crest, and die away, and race along the crest again, as tiny gas jets blow out and re-ignite in heavy wind. But it was what they felt—a deadly hail of bullets—that tried them, without finding them wanting. For protection and retort they could only shoot almost straight above their heads, without ever seeing their foe hidden behind the topmost boulders.

They were advancing in too close formation, giving the bullets but little chance to miss the

aggregate mass. Mown down as grass before a scythe, still they climbed up and onward, never dreaming of another course. Some men of the Northamptonshire Regiment dashed up after them, and, all together, they drove the Boers from that fastness, and saw them leaping down the further side of the hill, and across a little valley to the heights beyond.

The Grenadiers, out of but a part of the battalion, lost something like 120 men in a few minutes. But almost as severe work was done by their comrades in arms, by the Scots Guards, the Northamptonshires, the Northumberland Fusiliers, and the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, in different parts of the field. The Northumberlands tackled a Boer position next in strength to that stormed by the Grenadiers, and also lost heavily.

The battle opened at about 4.20 a.m., and it was precisely three hours later that a volley of British cheers proclaimed the capture of the last of the strongly-fortified hills. The artillery and naval guns, which had not been brought into action until five o'clock, silenced the last of two Boer batteries at the moment of this cheering.

After that the Boers ran down from the hills

like flowing water, and took up new positions on some lower land behind. Fierce attacks, notably by the Yorkshires, Northumberlands, and Northamptons, quickly made the new positions untenable, and the rest of that day's drama revealed the rapid flight of the Boers over the open veldt, and the ineffectual pursuit of them by the 9th Lancers.

During this engagement the Boers fought their own style of battle obstinately and with courage. But—and it seems there must always be a "but" when one endeavours to give credit generously to this foe—they marred the day most shockingly.

In two places they displayed flags of truce in order to bring the British out of cover, and then shoot them down. In one case, where the famous correspondent, E. F. Knight, was wounded, every one of the offenders was killed. In the other the man who tied his handkerchief to his rifle was subsequently taken prisoner. Besides this treachery, twelve of our men were shot with dum-dum bullets.

I went upon the field with the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, and a description of the manner in which they went into action will serve as illustrating the course pursued by all the forces

except the Naval Brigade. The privates were, as already described, with dulled buttons, muddied straps and belts and pouches, and with the handles and scabbards of their bayonets painted khaki colour.

On this eventful morning, for the first time in their lives, perhaps for the first time in British history, the officers threw aside their swords and put on the accoutrements of privates, even to their rifles. Thus I saw Colonel Barter, of the Yorkshires, stride off with his battalion, and thus he led them into the hell's rain of lead, obeying the letter of the new regulation by an attempt at disguise, which took no note of his towering and athletic figure, or his natural pose and carriage of command. Thus dressed I also saw the gallant commander of the Grenadier Guards lying in the broiling sun, propped against a rock, wounded—and telling the ambulance men to look after his gashed and blood-stained men who lay around him among the rocks. Let it be remembered in all accounts of battles in this war, that if Tommy has the hottest sort of work, he does it side by side with his officers. Such is the traditional Anglo-Saxon way.

CHAPTER XIV

BOERS IN WAR

AFTER the Belmont battle I walked over the entire field, and between what I saw, and what was told me by our officers and men who had taken part in the assault, I learned more about the Boers as fighting men than I had been able to gather all over the Cape Colony in the preceding four weeks.

A kopje in this country is practically a pile of boulders—a stone heap. It may be either a hill or a small mountain—fifty feet or one thousand five hundred feet in height, though in the battle-fields where we had thus far fought the kopjes had not been above five hundred, or less than one hundred and fifty feet.

All were heaps of loose boulders, and the practice of the enemy was to lift and carry the smaller rocks about, so as to build breastworks of them.

Behind these, always built around the tops of the hills, the Boers hide and shoot.

Let me describe the top of one small hill in the Belmont engagement, the one in storming which the brave Grenadiers suffered part of their fearfully heavy loss. All around the edge of its crest were circular or semi-circular breastworks of rocks. They were so many forts—one for each fighting man. Placed high in air, and overlooking a great valley, they were very like the lofty eyries of birds of prey. To look into them, with their rude bedding, scattered food, and general *débris*, was as if one viewed the nests of so many hawks.

On this kopje the Boer commander had compelled the poorer men of his commando to live for weeks. I took it that these were men of the servant and the labourer class. Their dead, whose untidy and neglected bodies I saw seated as the British bullets and bayonets found them, confirmed this theory, for they were poorly clad, unshaven, unclean, and hungry-looking. They were of that class of Boer whom James Bryce describes as having started at a seventeenth-century standard, and deteriorated for three hundred years. I knew when I saw such men among the dead, the wounded, and the prisoners, how it could be that

white men could misuse the white flag, and mock the sacred purpose of the Geneva Cross.

In nearly every eyrie where men had been compelled to stay and live there was a tea-kettle, an extra coat for night covering, a sack in which food and clothes had been brought, and which next had served as a pallet; some mealies, unleavened biscuits or bread-cakes, junks of biltong or jerked meat, and a kitchen knife.

The food, the dirt, and the extraordinary profusion of cartridges and cartridge-wrappings were all mixed together, but the dirt and the disorder were not so offensive as the grimy and revolting condition of the dead.

A few commanding breastworks had been built as for a citadel on the crest of the kopje above the ring of eyries.

In one of these I found a young Boer dead, with a bullet hole in his forehead. He was of a superior type, intelligent of face, neatly dressed, and had been shooting with gloves on his hands. Had he lived to escape he would have been one of the very great many Boers who were seen flying down the farther side of the range of kopjes, and leaping upon their horses or into their Cape carts and "spiders." They had done what damage they

could to us, and as soon as their own lives were endangered, they commanded their subordinates to remain, and sought their own safety.

These are Boer principles—in keeping with the etiquette and conventions of a people who know neither the customs nor courtesies of war. It is not by guesswork that I thus describe their methods. It is what our prisoners have told me.

It would take long to exhaust the list of peculiarities, eccentricities, anomalies, and novelties of this war, waged against us by an undisciplined force of rebels, who are soldiers by instinct, slayers by training, and farmers or cattle raisers for livelihood. But more astonishing is the fact that some of the better-class Boers have come to battle in their carriages, like gentlemen driving to the Derby at home, and, having done their best, have retired in the same way, leaving their vassals to cover their retreat.

More numerous than those who come in carriages to battle are those who send their best horses ahead, and ride to the front on inferior animals. They "knee-halter" their best horses, turn out upon the veldt the poorer ones they have ridden, and—when retreat is ordered—run down the kopjes and mount their fast steeds in order

to be able to elude a cavalry chase, which had thus far been impossible because the horses of our few mounted men had either had too much work earlier in the day, or were overwhelmed by fire from unexpected quarters.

I heard that the only uniforms in the Boer ranks were those of the Transvaal Artillery, but if this was true, I had not yet seen them. All whom I had seen were clad like the farmers and villagers we met with along our line of march. They wore short coats, trousers of patterns that are often so loud that they almost scream, and narrow-brimmed soft hats of light-brown felt.

The prisoners whom we captured seemed a sullen, unprepossessing lot, asking no favours, and taking kindnesses very callously. Most of them pretended to understand no English, though I am assured that there are no Free State Boers who do not habitually speak English with the English, and Dutch among themselves.

With the far greater number of men who delivered themselves to us, or deliberately put themselves in the way of capture, the case was different.

They were of English or partly British blood, held their heads up, displayed bright eyes and

frank faces, and said bluntly that they had not believed in the war, or taken part in it except under compulsion. They told us that no notice was given them; that the commanders or field cornets rode up to their houses, and ordered them to fall in and follow at once. The legalised penalty for refusal was death. To compare these men with the miscreant we captured after he had ensnared some of our men with a false flag of truce would be like comparing cultivation with barbarism—a Londoner with a cave-dweller. This scoundrel wore stiff, bristling hair all round a face whose features were those of a primitive man.

In their kopjes at Belmont the ground was littered with cartridges, every one of which bore the mark of the leading London makers. This was true of everything else that was captured, or left behind by these "Orange Free Staters"; everything of theirs bore English marks. It was not until we met with a Transvaal commando at the battle of Graspan (otherwise called Enslin and Royslaagte) that we saw any exception to this rule.

CHAPTER XV

BATTLE OF GRASPAN

THE battle of Belmont, with which Lord Methuen opened the ball on his side of the Republics, was almost wholly an infantry fight, but that at Graspan was rather more an artillery duel; in fact, the artillery came into greater play and prominence as the battles succeeded one another.

Although the British infantry had borne brave part and suffered considerable losses, the last two victories had been greatly accelerated by cannon, and the next one was to see our batteries more conspicuous still. The nature of the Boer defences, and the Boer dread of artillery, have brought this about.

The battle of Graspan was called "Enslin" officially by the army, and Royslaagte by the Boers, but the word "Graspan" was painted on the railway station signboard beside the position occupied

by our left, and so strongly had the name taken root that no other need be used in treating of that fight.

The Boers fortified themselves on a series of low steep hills, broken at the left by a long, grassy ridge, which linked a smaller stony kopje to the larger ones. On this smaller kopje a Transvaal commando fought with German ammunition—the first Transvaalers and the first foreign ammunition used against us. Before the battle opened some of us saw Boers as thick as ants on a grassy ridge, moving over to the larger kopjes.

It was at about six o'clock in the morning of the 26th that fire was opened on a party of Rimington's scouts who were in advance of us. Then our troops marched into position facing the larger kopjes, and half an hour later our batteries opened fire on the rocks which hid the enemy. The naval battery in the centre, at five thousand yards distance, joined with the shorter-range artillery in bursting shrapnel with unvarying accuracy over the enemy. The Boers as repeatedly shot beyond and behind our men. They seemed to have guns everywhere, stationed singly all over the hills.

Soon after seven o'clock the excellent marksmanship of a gunner behind the grassy ridge attracted

the attention, and perhaps stirred the pride, of our gunners, and the naval battery undertook to silence him. Then began a very dramatic and long-sustained combat which was a striking feature of the battle. The Boer gun was never seen, and the man who served it never once saw us. His piece was hidden beyond the ridge on the further slope, and a comrade gave him his range and direction.

For a long time this gunner devoted his attention to one of our field batteries. Next he attacked the black mass made by their horses and limbers. Later he paid his respects to the naval gun and its crew. He never achieved perfect excellence, for he did no damage to any British gun, he killed but two horses in the field, and he wounded but five of our men altogether. And yet he got his range so quickly and well, and he was so persistent and so wholly invisible, that our men set their teeth in grim determination to destroy him. They had for a target nothing but the thin smoke which rose over his gun, but into that little floating cloud they planted shot and shell, until at the end of the day they had expended two hundred and ten rounds, if I remember the extraordinary figure correctly. All the other Boer guns were silenced before this one was, and at twenty minutes to ten

this was disabled, and every gun of the enemy was speechless.

Presently, at about half-past seven, our men began creeping closer and closer to the foe hidden among the stones above our heads. At 7.45 the Boer riflemen discharged a fiendish series of sharp volleys at us, assisted by their batteries. Our field batteries took note of the position of these guns, and bent a cross-fire upon them, dropping two, three, and even four shells at a time upon the Boer artillery. It was after eight o'clock when our infantry made another of those gallant rushes into a rain of lead which this war has called for with a frequency, and with a quality of danger, that I fancy no previous conflict has so often evoked.

The bulk of the enemy held a tall, rocky kopje, and our plan was to rush it, as we had rushed several such strongholds at Belmont. The troops of the Ninth Brigade led the way, and the Naval Brigade were in the very front. The Guards Brigade, lustrous with honour after the manner in which they had borne the brunt of the last fight, were now in the rear, drawn up in wide formation on the level veldt, and advancing slowly to support the attacking force.

The naval men marched boldly to the foot of

the kopje, meeting, but not daunted by, the fearful fire.

They reached the rocks and began the ascent, huddled together, as if in utter ignorance of the dire necessity, in such warfare, for giving such a hail of shot all possible room to spend itself in space, and the least possible chance to lodge in human bodies. It is said that the shape of the kopje made this in some degree necessary, but they appeared to despise all danger.

They spent but very little time in taking breath, or in seeking shelter among the rocks; and pushed straight up the acclivity, now walking, now spurting up in short dashes.

It was horrible to see what damage befell them. An officer of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry declared that in the heat of the rush he could only think of his sorrow for these men—his sorrow, and his amazement at their valour. And Major Lindley, surgeon to Rimington's Guides, said he was riveted to the spot by the sight of such magnificent, reckless courage, though the bullets were falling thickly around him also.

One man in every two was struck down in the furious onset of that little brigade of straw-hatted

shipmates, and precisely one half the force fell on the kopje, dead or wounded.

The Yorkshires, moving five paces apart, dashed up to support the marines, the men of the Northamptonshire Regiment followed, and all stormed the position together.

Perhaps another battalion was in the rear, but these were the men who were in first at the death. They made it far too hot for the astonished Boers, who turned and fled down the other side of the hill, as the first of the British reached its top.

From the veldt the Boers were seen fleeing along the low ridge in great numbers, while our men, who had occupied their position, saw greater numbers dashing on horseback into the open country to the northward.

A battery was sent for to shell them; it seemed as if with this help the majority of the runaways might be captured, but the horses were spent, and in an hour's time no battery had come. Our mounted infantry started to pursue the fugitives by passing between two middle kopjes, from and at which not a shot had been fired, and without the slightest warning two volleys, as concerted as if fired by Europeans, checked them with a sheet of missiles. It was estimated that fifteen hun-

dred Boers had been in hiding there. They, too, melted away before word of their presence could be sent to our leaders.

Thus the battle ended. The enemy had been shelled away from some strongholds. The gallantry of our foot forces had accelerated their flight from others, and destroyed a great number of them, but the day belonged to the men who handled our great guns.

Our losses were 155 killed, 165 wounded, and the Boers suffered very nearly as heavily. As they sink their dead in rivers, bury them in the sand, and ride off with them over their saddle-bows, it is never easy to estimate their casualties.

CHAPTER XVI

BATTLE OF MODDER RIVER

WE had fought two battles in five days, and then, after a short march, had come upon a large pond, and had halted and camped beside it.

What a priceless possession water was, or the taste of it, or even the sight of it, to ten thousand marching men on this parched veldt! We had started from water at Orange River, marched to water at Fincham's Farm, then on again to the next water at Belmont, and fought there. Thence we had marched to Graspan and fought, treasuring a little water more than we treasured human lives, and so on until we filled our carts and bottles at this pond by Honey Nest Kloof.

To the north of us, in purple bulk, rose the hills that lie a few miles beyond the Modder River. They interested us because many said that in or beyond them we must meet the Boers for the last

time before entering Kimberley, a dozen miles further on. But we had water a-plenty—to drink, to wash in, even for bathing on the part of those who did not mind doing so in a pond where the mules were watered, and the mud was some feet deep.

We could not see the Modder, but we knew that it somewhere pierced the wide, nearly level field of sage tufts and sparse young grass before us. As the afternoon wore on we heard that just out of sight there was a village in our path where three hundred Boers were entrenched. One story was that a part of their force had shot at another part for trying to desert. Another rumour ran that, instead of this, all had shot at Rimington's "night cat" guides, who had sent in to us for help which we had not supplied.

But we were camped beside abundant water, we had fought two stiff battles in five days, and we were resting. Take my own case to show how others fared: I had borrowed a waterproof covering from an ammunition cart, and had made a shelter of it over four uprights—two guns and two sticks. I had filled my water-bottle, and also a two-quart canvas bag which leaked, and I was lying on a blanket, writing a description of

Belmont fight, and exulting in the sound of the waste of my water as it dripped from the bag. Every half-hour I quaffed water, or treated the colonel, or the *Times* correspondent, to a drink. This was out of pure camaraderie, for they had plenty also. When it was too dark to write I washed my other flannel shirt and my other socks, and dabbled in the water. All of us in the Yorkshire Light Infantry did the same, as if we were ducks.

In the morning of the next day, Tuesday, November 28th, we took marching form at the leisurely hour of half-past four, and even then halted often. Brigadier-General Pole-Carew had just arrived, and rode about the field, being introduced to the commanders of the battalions of the 9th Brigade—the Yorkshire Light Infantry, 5th Northumberlands, Loyal Lancashires, the Northamptonshires, the Mounted Infantry, 9th Lancers, the Royal Artillerymen, and the rest. In the other brigade the two Coldstreams, the Scots Guards, the Grenadiers, and the freshly-arrived Argyll and Sutherland Regiment were forming the right of the advance.

We marched four miles or more, and were able to see a long, thin fringe of trees which we were

certain marked the hidden course of the Modder, flowing in a stream twenty or thirty yards wide at the bottom of the deep channel it had cut in the level prairie—a huge canal, yet one that was as invisible until you came to its edge as were the Boers who lined the bank, down on their knees, Mausers in hand, like a three-mile jaw full of sunken teeth.

Three miles of Boers were there, and behind them in the hills and on the farther shore they had taken up a six-mile artillery line. Straight towards them we marched on. Hares scampered from before us, a flock of bustards rose clumsily at our approach, the little "thickheads" shot up, cried "Hui!" and fell into the sage, but otherwise all was calm and peaceful—a glorious, brilliant summer morning on the veldt.

Far over on the right a body of perhaps five hundred horsemen rode in full view, bunched together; halted, and then rode on again, like theatrical cavalry moving across a stage. They were Boers showing themselves to the British openly for the first time in our experience with Lord Methuen's column. They were impudent. They rode rapidly to the left, and our mounted infantry gave them chase. A concealed gun beside

a little mud-house opened fire on the mounted men, our 18th Battery retorted, and thus began this battle, so memorable in many ways, so unique in several aspects, so certain to have a distinct place of its own in British history.

This was at about seven o'clock in the morning. The Boers who had shown themselves were shelled out of a little laager on the extreme right, and chased ineffectually by our mounted infantry. Boer guns belched flame and thin blue smoke from several positions across the hidden river, our 18th and 75th Field Batteries replied with spirit, and the Lancers rode far to the right, to be within hail if the vanishing mounted infantry needed fleet help. The batteries all along our four or five mile line came into action as a larger number of Boer guns disclosed their positions, and our infantry, long halted, began a slow advance, feeling its way. The Guards Brigade went straight ahead toward the river, forming the right wing. The 9th Brigade moved diagonally across to the left toward the part of the river beyond the broken railway bridge, where they found a field battery, and the naval guns covering them with hot fire.

Where the Guards advanced the plain inclined downward from the river like a theatre stage. On

the other side of the railway—to the left—there was a well-defined ridge between our soldiers and the river, and this concealed their approach. On the right the hidden Boers in their trenches on our side of the Modder could see the body of a man at any point before them for three miles. On the left those who were on the further shore could only see our forces after they reached the ridge which ran across.

It was nearly ten o'clock when the Boers on the right opened upon our advancing Guards a hot continuous rifle fire, unprecedented in severity and duration, which ceased for only two brief intervals between ten o'clock in the morning and twenty minutes past six o'clock in the evening, when the sun sank. Like a ripping of the air, like a tearing of some part of nature, that hell's vomit began, and was immediately answered by the Guards.

Our soldiers started forward with 150 to 160 rounds, and many bags and boxes of cartridges were sent creepingly to them during the afternoon. The Boers had more ammunition than we. When I walked through their trenches at next daybreak it seemed as though they had been standing toe deep in their shells; that they had had cartridges

to sleep upon, to eat, to bury their dead beneath, if they had cared to use them in such ways.

At first soldiers and correspondents called to each other that they had never heard such a fury of firing. An hour or two later somebody asked what it sounded like, and I said: "crackers let off in a barrel." Two or three hours later it seemed more like an exaggerated sound of the perpetual frying of fat.

Lord Methuen, in the course of the morning, led a movement of the Guards to flank the Boers. He realised the need of some bold and gallant, even grand action, to shorten this duel between a foe that was unseen, yet could see, and his worthier force, which could not do else than lie still or suffer useless damage. The general's purpose was valiantly attempted, but the fire was too hot and the river too deep, so that his plan had to be abandoned so far as the right of the field was concerned.

Before and long after this I moved behind the Scots and Coldstreams, seeing the wounded limp away, or crawl back, or being carried in, always through a fire so thick and fearful that no man can imagine how any one passed under or through it. Many could not. I saw and heard of many who,

being crippled, lay flat for hours, not daring to rise for succour. If one asked a comrade for a drink of water, he saw the bottle, or the hand that was passing it, pierced by a dum-dum or a one-pounder Nordenfeldt shell. Or if he raised his head to writhe in his pain he felt his helmet shot away.

From the rear ammunition-carriers and stretcher-bearers walked boldly forward, until, the moment they were within range, a sheet, a torrent of bullets and small shells raked the air, as jets of water spurt from a flower-sprinkler. But that image is too faint, for the jets were all whistling or shrieking, throwing up fountains of red sand, exploding in hundreds of detonations like echoes of the guns that spewed them. At this down upon their bellies dropped the stretcher-bearers and the cartridge-carriers, and there they lay for hours, never rising or attempting to rise without loosing this torrent anew. Once a poor Coldstream private with one foot shot away lay in this leaden rain crying for help. I gave him my water-bottle, and Mr. Knox, the Reuter correspondent, ran to some stretcher-bearers to beg them to carry the man to the ambulance train.

"We would be killed if we went to him," one said.

"Come with me," said Knox; "I'll lead if you will follow." Thus relief came to one poor sufferer.

This was the state of affairs on the right, and thus it remained for more than eight hours; but the extraordinary fact about it is that nothing was being effected by this awful and unparalleled fire. A few hundreds were hit on both sides, but our front was not advanced—did not progress materially the whole day long. The little lot of Boers who had been so audacious earlier in the day returned in the afternoon, after the mounted infantry had given up trying to capture them. And now they flanked us and poured a tremendous volley or two into our ambulance and ammunition train, frightening the Kaffir drivers and their mules into a panic, and yet not profiting by their success, for they retired as suddenly as they had reappeared.

This firing on the ambulances with their loads of wounded was not an isolated incident. Earlier in the day I had three times seen the terrible new Maxim-Nordenfeldt one-pound quick-firer trained on our Red Cross men who were sent forward to be nearer the wounded and to gather them in.

That awful new gun! Mauser fire starts with

a crack! goes on with the buzz of a bee, and ends with a ping! in the earth or one's body. One gets used to it, familiar with it, a little inclined to be indifferent to it. But the new one-pound quick-firer carries a menace which compels respect. It goes off with a "putt—putt—putt—putt," like the ten-billion-times-exaggerated noise of water gurgling in a bottle. The force and violence and intensity of the noise make it seem that whatever is coming will perforate chilled steel. And then come the bullets, like so many jets of steam released from the highest pressure, and singing like little steam-whistles.

It was on the right that nothing was being effected. We were more active and successful on the left.

Lord Methuen had gone over to that side in the afternoon, and had found the Yorkshire Light Infantry in the van, and at the slight ridge which in a measure commanded the Boers. Some of them were in a small house on our side of the river, and these had been routed by a rush of the Yorkshires. Captain Bond and his men were in advance, and these Lord Methuen took with him in an attempt to ford the stream. It was not within human possibility for this to be done at

that point, so hot was the fire from behind walls and earthworks beyond, and so unfordable was the river there. It was in retiring under this blistering fire that the general was wounded—a flesh wound entailing considerable suffering, but happily no real danger.

The brave example he set was followed by Colonel Barter, of the Yorkshires, who, with twenty men or more, rushed for a shallow stony spot in the river, and got across, while a battery and the rifle fire of the men behind him drove the Boers out of the angle of wall and the trenches that had covered the ford. Other men pressed after these, notably some of the Argyll and Sutherland Regiment, who behaved most gallantly.

Colonel Barter and his force of four hundred at its largest, now advanced to the right towards the Boer stronghold, through gardens and over walls. But they were so confused with the enemy, whose position they had taken, that they received the fire of our own troops, and even a shell from one of our batteries. Therefore they rested where this fire halted them, on the enemy's side.

Their success, and the unceasing and accurate fire of our guns all day long, quite exhausted the

stamina of the Boers. They held to their trenches until dusk and then retired, sinking some of their dead in the river, it is said, carrying off what wounded they could, and spiriting away their guns in the almost magical manner in which they have performed these feats after each of their battles.

They had twenty guns to our nineteen, and while none of ours were better than twelve-pounders, they had at least one very heavy piece. They massed eleven thousand men, and we had less than ten thousand. They fought in a position of which they had boasted as their best.

About one hundred were slain, and we took nearly as many prisoners, while their wounded probably equalled ours in number. Taken at such a tremendous disadvantage, it was certain that we must suffer great damage. Our losses were 67 killed, 370 wounded, 18 missing. Of the killed, four were officers, and there were 19 officers wounded. Our gains were greater. We beat their largest force on this side, and the three generals who led it; we rested beyond their strongest position, twenty-four miles from Kimberley, hoping soon to be there.

CHAPTER XVII

ECHOES OF MODDER RIVER

THE more one saw of Modder River battle-field, and the more one considered the battle, the more its terrific character was revealed and realised.

Some phases of the fight, and some of the tales we heard of the part the Boers played in it, make it certain that there never was a battle like it.

At first we were impressed by the sagacity shown by the Boer leaders in entrenching their men where they did, at the top and back of a vast, smooth, inclined plane, every inch of which was visible to these hidden men.

But by remaining long enough to go thoroughly over the field, we learned that an even stronger and in all ways better position could have been

made for most of them just behind the one they chose, and on the island in the river.

It must be understood that their horde lay entrenched on the edge of the river at a point where the Modder and the Reit join one another.

The land between the two is called an island, and this land continues the upward slope of the veldt, so that it is higher and more commanding, and, better yet for Boer purposes, it is luxuriant with trees and bushes.

Here, in fact, the Boers did put their sharpshooters, and here they manipulated their deadly "putt-putt" gun, as our army has nicknamed the Vickers-Maxim quick-firer, which commanded such respect as to make every man who heard it bow his head or prostrate his body.

Men so shrewd and instinctively soldierly as the Boers must have known that this more elevated position, with the river in front of it as a moat, was superior to the one they selected.

A story which many Boer prisoners have told us tends to explain why the lower ground was chosen—though it is a tale which can be credited only by those of us who are accustomed to the extraordinary phases and conditions of this strangest of modern wars.

The story is that a large proportion of the Free State Boers were so averse to fighting in the first place, and so shaken by our incessant and accurate artillery fire, that they were only kept in the trenches at the point of revolvers held over them by their leaders, who swore to shoot any man who tried to desert. This was told us by many prisoners taken at different times and places.

If it is true, it may well be that there was a serious purpose in choosing the lower ground for the Boer position, because thus the river, where it is deepest and impossible to ford, was immediately at their backs.

After I had seen no more of the field than their three-mile line of trenches, I could not understand how we had been able to dislodge them, or why they had at last left the field to us. Their position seemed superb—impregnable. But yesterday a search for the place from which the "putt-putt" gun was fired led me to the island overlooking the river and the trenches. Then I saw plainly why and how we had gained the victory.

Beyond the British infantry lines, where our Guards' Brigade were so cruelly forced to lie for more than eight hours under a driving rain of lead from an enemy they could never see, we

worked three Royal Artillery batteries. These were the 18th and 75th, which fired all day long, and the 62nd, which came twenty miles to our aid, and got into action at half-past four in the afternoon, with horses so fagged that the men had been obliged to walk the last few miles.

These batteries played on the trenches and on the island, which two points are so close that both were damaged alike. The shells which scattered their shrapnel upon the men in the trenches carried their heavy metal cases over to the island. Much of the shrapnel was also carried there. The result, as seen afterwards, was a surface devastation almost baffling description. In the space of a mile in length and a quarter of a mile in width there was scarcely a square yard not torn up, perforated, riddled, ploughed, and raked. Shrapnel bullets, shell cases, fuses, and bits of metal lay all over the place. Incredible as it sounds, there were on that ground two rusty old tins—one a small "bully-beef" tin and the other a biscuit-tin, both riddled with shrapnel and shot.

In that scene lies the explanation of the flight of the Boers. In that scene one finds some confirmation of the story that the Boers had to be kept to their work under threat of the revolver.

A common reliance of the Boer was upon gin. Empty gin-bottles, bottles still containing gin, and one full bottle of that spirit, were to be seen stuck in the loose dirt of the trenches. In every trench was a surprising litter of shell cartridges of many sorts—Mausers, Martini-Henrys, and two or three sorts of expanding and explosive bullets.

The island seems to have been where the sharp-shooters were placed—on the ground, behind trenches, and in the trees. We understood from the prisoners that these were always stationed in couples, and that the orders were that whenever one was killed or wounded his companion was to bury him, or carry him off the field. Continually we found the dead bodies of Boers in the river, buried in the sand with fingers or boots protruding, heaped in a trench, and elsewhere.

When I searched the island I found profuse proofs of other burials beside these—of new dead not included in any estimate. Here were grave-shaped mounds of such fresh appearance and suggestive shape that I examined them. They were covered with short bush growths, and lo! when we touched these they came out of the earth, and were seen to be tree-twigs, and branches cut from trees and stuck in the mounds.

Some distance back in the island we found a large trench, of a size to hold twenty bodies. It gave indubitable proof of its contents. As we understand the tactics of our enemy, these graves are apt to be those of their humbler soldiers. We know that they carry off in carts, and across their saddles, the bodies of the more important dead.

This was done at this battle. A woman, whose cottage was in the rear of a field north of the river, declared that all day long the wounded came to her house upon each other's heels to have their wounds dressed, and said that the dead in large numbers were carried upon planks placed upon the backs of ponies northward to the Boer lines. First in the mind of the Boer is the desire to hide his dead, and to lie about their number. It is from their own that they most desire to hide the truth. The prisoners we took all said that only eighteen had been killed, but the deserters said the loss of life was very great, and that in the river quite a hundred were sunk with weights.

We may learn some day that in killed alone the Boers lost at least three hundred.

It is wonderful how the formation of the country aids, and perhaps inspires, the Boer methods of warfare. You have heard how the burgher comes

to battle with two horses, a poor one to carry him to the fight, and the best steed he has to be kept fresh until it is needed to carry him swiftly away. Usually we have seen the Boers run down the far sides of the kopjes they have been defending, to find horses knee-haltered on the veldt, and to mount them and ride away.

At Belmont, when a thousand or more were in full flight, they all suddenly disappeared in a mysterious way. We found that all had ridden into what they call a "sluit," which is broad and deep enough to hide a cavalry regiment. In this trough or ravine they made their way to the next place of rendezvous. On the island at Modder River such a ravine or trough exists. It is thirty feet wide and fifteen deep. We found its bottom covered with hay and other fodder, and we knew that in it, out of harm's way and yet close at hand, they had kept their horses in readiness for their retreat.

After every battle the veldt has been dotted with Boer horses, in consequence of this custom of bringing a remount for each well-to-do man, and in consequence of the loss of riders by death and wounds. But both previous battle-fields combined showed no such number of riderless

steeds as Modder River. There were literally hundreds of them. I had lost mine in the fight, but in the first half-hour of the next morning I took my choice of four, and might have made my pick from a hundred, saddled and bridled, before I had gone half over the field.

We now know that it was our artillery fire that thinned the ranks and broke the nerve of the enemy. It was a fearful assault produced by an extraordinary discharge of shot and shell.

The four naval guns fired some five hundred and fourteen rounds, the 18th Battery fired eleven hundred rounds, the 75th fired nine hundred rounds, and the 62nd five hundred; or three thousand rounds in all. As to the rifle fire, most of our men took into the fight one hundred and fifty or one hundred and sixty rounds, and the average fire per rifle by the nine battalions must have been one hundred rounds. The climax of the Boers' desire to vacate the field was reached when a stalwart British cheer broke upon their ears at their side and in their rear.

There should not be any confusion as to what men raised this cheer and were the first to ford the river; but there is. It is due to the fact that men of several ambitious commands composed the first body of forders.

To put history right, the credit of first crossing the river belongs to a small party of Coldstream Guardsmen who early in the day waded in to their waists, and then swam, laden with all their gear and one hundred and sixty rounds of ammunition. There were between twenty-four and forty men in this body, and though many won across, two were nearly drowned, and all saw that it was wise to return. The river was too deep, and when they reached the further shore they sank in mud to their knees.

This happened on the extreme right of the line, where Lord Methuen made his first gallant attempt to force a passage.

He tried again on the far left, and it was there that, beyond any doubt or dispute, Colonel Barter, of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, got across by a fairly good fording-place with a score or two dozen men, some of whom were his own, while others were men of the Argyll and Sutherlandshire and the North Lancashire Regiments. They landed against some trenches, and an angle of stone wall which were held by some three hundred Boers.

Just as they were crossing a battery of Royal Artillery rolled up in the rear of our men, and,

before it had time to unlimber, all the Boers fled, jostling and even knocking each other down in eagerness to mount. In time our force across the river numbered four hundred, and Brigadier-General Pole-Carew took command. Our own shells and our own rifle fire beat upon this little band, and it halted and cheered to disclose its nationality.

That is the truth of a heroic movement, of which too many versions have been given.

It is said that the Boers fight in deadly terror of our bayonets, which we had not yet had a chance to use upon them, and this increased their fever for flight. They have also had a wholesome dread of our lyddite shells—of which, likewise, we had not yet made any use; but at this battle General Cronjé, who watched the whole fight, supposed our naval guns were firing lyddite, and said to his staff, "I've been watching that stuff all day, and I don't think much of it."

CHAPTER XVIII

FILLING TOMMY'S WATER-BOTTLE

WE knew what fighting was, but we also learned a few things about water—we men on Methuen's march.

When we were over-civilised, and lived in London, we made poor jokes at the expense of water, saying that it gave laundresses a living, that it was invented to float Noah's "greatest Zoo on earth," and other such puerilities.

We never joke about water now. The first time we really appreciated it we were starting out from Orange River. The previous night had been so cold that I spent it in walking all over several camps, between the prostrate bodies of restless, shivering soldiers. Some made no pretence of sleeping, but divided their time between gathering sticks, and building little fires to huddle round while they lasted.

In time that agony was over; and we were marching, and watching the day break. In breaking it seemed to rend the earth's blanket of atmosphere, and let the sun's heat out upon us as fiercely as furnace fires strike stokers in the broiling belly of a ship.

On and on we marched, in heavy sand, or over stones, or stumbling across furrowed ground—all gasping like fishes thrown on a beach.

At first our lips dried and cracked, then our mouths parched, and finally our throats became as if they were coated with plaster of Paris. The hair shrivelled on our hands, and our feet grew dry as devilled bones. Here and there a man fell forward on his hands and knees, or stumbled out of the ranks, and lurched prone on the veldt.

In the course of the march some skimpy, light-green trees broke the line of the horizon ahead, and put new heart in us, for it was to those trees —at a place called "Fincham's"—that we were to march.

Everything has its ending, and at last we came to the first of the three verdant clumps of trees. They were poplars, and at their feet, darkening under their foliage, was a mud-banked pool of dirty water, which tailed off to the northward

in a tiny, stagnant-looking brooklet. Men with horses who had been ahead were watering their beasts, and to these our Tommies called, as we halted, "fill this bottle for me, will ye, mate?"

But their officers, riding beside them, and ever apprehensive of dysentery and typhoid, called aloud, "pass the order that no one is to drink this water. It will only make the men ill."

My horse showed me how the men regarded this order, for all men are but babies of varying growth, and no man is so much of a baby as a horse. He would have his drink. Turn his head how I would, or turn it how often, back he would go to the edge of the stream. He had his way and water, but Tommy did not, for an officer's order is stronger than a curbed bit of steel.

A camp was planned, and the battalions were marched to their places. The mess-sergeants and men got out their "dickshees," or Flanders kettles, their food, and their firewood to cook our breakfasts, and the transport men and grooms leaped bareback on five hundred horses, or pulled at strings of mules to take them all to water—good water—somewhere ahead.

With my colonel, C. St. Leger Barter, of the Yorkshire Light Infantry, I walked after the

horses—he in his neat suit of khaki-coloured serge, of lounging coat and riding breeches, with his silver-topped stick in hand, I in khaki, with a Mexican sombrero on my head, and cowboy "chaps," or gaiters, on my legs—the wonder of all who saw them.

We came to Fincham's, a yellow Spanish-looking house, all set about with trees. In and out of its yard horses and mules passed in scores, and behind the house the Tommies crowded like bees round a honey pot, filling their cloth-clad bottles out of a stone tank, while other Tommies walked round and round a sort of windlass that pumped new water into the tank.

Every man filled his bottle, emptied it down his throat, and filled it again.

A water-mania, a thirst-madness, was upon the troops. We paddled in spilled water, and the sounds it made in pouring, gurgling, and splashing were as pleasant music to all our ears. The colonel and I found some two-quart tin canteens—one of which afterwards caught the sun on Modder River battlefield, and directed the enemy's fire upon me until I put it under me out of sight. We filled these canteens, and took long drinks out of them; and then we found a bar-room with German lager

in bottles, and bought all there was—but that is a digression.

. We stayed a day or so, and then, one blistering afternoon, our column—a many-thousand-legged centipede—streamed along the thirsty, heat-refracting veldt again for Belmont.

After nightfall, in an amazing, hopeless tangle of men and horses and waggons, we squeezed our mass between two kopjes, and were nearly two hours in getting ourselves together, in boiling some tea, and in stretching ourselves on the now cold earth to court a little sleep.

Men and carts kept moving ahead and coming back with water—where from most of us did not know. But the precious fluid was plentiful. We drank till our waistbands cut into us, and then we fell asleep.

In the chilly night, with a cup of hot cocoa to hearten us up, we crept out into the faint moonlight shadows of some hills, and by daybreak began to fight the awful battle of Belmont. I was late in returning to camp, for it is my custom to go all over a battlefield after a fight.

But when I did return, what a sight met my eyes!

Only a Persian poet could do justice to it. It was like the celestial imaginings of a pious Mussul-

man. At the head of the glen where we had camped was an oasis of green trees toe-deep in the edges of a pond. Near by was a stone tank full of crystal water, and beside it our people had constructed another of white canvas, in which the same pure liquid shone like melted diamonds, touched with emerald shadows by some sprays of foliage above.

Lines of men were standing beside the tanks dipping in their bottles, a line at a time. Other men in scores sat in the shade beside the water. Under the trees, in the invigorating coolness of their shelter, the bullet-riddled, shell-mangled wounded were laid in rows upon stretchers, with the doctors and attendants ministering to them. Meanwhile to the great pool came the horses and mules, sucking up gallons of water each, and wading in deeper and deeper as they sucked.

It was indeed a weird picture—the fagged and dusty soldiers, the spent horses, the clouds of red powdery dust choking us all, the hot, bare veldt reaching away for ever in all directions, the horizon trembling and dancing before us by reason of the movement of the heated air ; finally, the bare, naked African sun, blazing down at us as the Boers had been doing earlier in the day.

We marched to Graspan with our water-bottles and each regimental water-cart filled, but the Tommies made away with their shares as quickly as Tommy does with the food and drink that's given him to keep him going for a day or more.

They fought the battle with parched throats, and then discovered that there was only one little well to supply us all with more. Around that well hundreds gathered, and when the buckets were being emptied into the carts the soldiers dipped up the wastage with their tins.

For myself, I got a cup of boiling water from a locomotive engine, and sat down to wait till I could drink it without being scalded. Ah, how priceless water is out here! Sometimes I thought of men with hose pipes drenching Fleet Street and the Strand with water in the dead of night. But I could not believe my own memory. It did not seem possible that water was ever thrown about like that.

We camped beside a muddy, grassy pond on the way to Modder River, and again we revelled in water. We actually washed our bodies and changed our clothing, and felt more or less like "just men made perfect."

On the next afternoon, in the heat of a fearful

battle, I asked an officer who guarded a water waggon of the Coldstream Guards to let me fill my bottle.

"We have not enough for our own men," said he.

"It was to your wounded men that I gave what I had," said I, turning away.

"Please come back and fill your bottle," said he; "you may have all you want."

Twenty minutes later more wounded men crawling to the rear began again to cross my path and beg for water.

"Please, sir, could you give me a little water?"

"That man over there has had one foot torn away. Could you spare him a drink of water?"

"Hello! How are you wounded? Can I do anything for you?"

"Give me some water, sir, for God's sake; that's all I want."

We had learned what war is, and more about the Boer than we knew a month ago; but, above all, we had learned the value of water.

CHAPTER XIX

BATTLE OF MAAGHERSFONTEIN

IT was the morning of December 11th.

We had pushed on one hundred and twenty miles from the advanced base at De Aar, and marched more than forty miles into the enemy's field, though all of it was within one of the Crown colonies.

Three times the enemy had opposed us, each time teaching us more and more about their methods, their stubbornness, and the queer game they play of facing us as long as they can damage us, and retiring as we reach the moment when we expect to demolish them. But each time the fact remained that we had forced them out of their superb and shrewdly-chosen positions.

They learned a great deal in these reverses. They discovered that, sprinkle themselves as they would over the sheer face of a rock-strewn hill,

and hide as they might among the rocks to shoot us in the open, or while we exposed ourselves on their hills, our valour would still lead us to storm their eyries and rush upon their soldiers regardless of their superior numbers, their torrents of bullets, and their almost unbroken cover.

Our officers had been taught at Sandhurst that to attack an entrenched foe successfully requires a force three times as strong as the defenders. But we forged ahead, as indifferent to such maxims as to the odds heaped high against us.

The profit the Boer took from this lesson he applied at Modder River for the first time in his history. Our shells had searched behind and between his adamantine shelters, and our soldiers had climbed up and into them, like lions which seek their prey in its most secret lairs.

Therefore the Boer, at Modder River, abandoned his rocks from behind which he had thought to blow the British into the sea, and ensconced himself in a line of trenches on the open veldt—trenches fringed with boughs and branches, which melted into the line of riverside trees behind them.

When we advanced to the next battle, near here, at Maaghersfontein, we had seen a great kopje

swarming with the foe, and imagined it the place where we were to fight them—but this exhibition of their surplus numbers proved a mere blind. Their mass was in trenches on the veldt ; the hill was merely where they placed their guns and kept their reinforcements.

After the Modder River fight, on November 28th, Lord Methuen halted us in camp until December 10th, waiting, we believe, for the battalions of the Highland Brigade, for the great naval gun and the howitzer battery, which use lyddite, and for the sorely-needed cavalry, which came to us in the form of the 12th Lancers. The valiant Ninth Brigade of Yorkshire Light Infantry, 5th Northumberlands, Loyal North Lancashires, Northamptonshires, 9th Lancers, and Mounted Infantry, which had done such gallant work in the previous battles, were now to be scattered, and in some measure supplanted, by the Argylls, Seaforths, Gordons, Black Watch, and Highland Light Infantry of the fresher brigade. They were to take the centre, and form the bulk of the attacking line with the Guards Brigade.

The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, the Mounted Infantry, and the 5th Fusiliers were to form the extreme right, and part of the North-

ampton Regiment was down at Graspan, where it had so bravely resisted those Boers who had cut our railway line and telegraph only a few days before; but the bulk of the hardened brigade were to remain in the Modder River camp, and hold this position against a rear attack during the Maaghersfontein combat.

On the afternoon of Sunday, the 10th, the great 4·7 gun, with its crew of short and stocky sailormen in broad-rimmed straw hats covered with khaki, was dragged by thirty-six oxen, and escorted by men of the 5th Fusiliers, to a ridge three miles north of this camp, overlooking the kopje infested by the Boers. The great gun shelled the hill wherever it was thought that the Boers could be seen, at ranges varying between six thousand and eight thousand yards.

Shells tore through the air with precisely the noise of an express train rushing at full speed, and when they burst they seemed to envelop an acre of ground in heavy brown smoke, which lifted and floated over the kopje as if it were a mass of the pulverised earth. It was said that windows three and a half miles away were rattled by each discharge. The noise was like the bark of a monster bull-dog, and the bursting of each shell sounded like the cough of a giant.

The Tommies dubbed the gun "Joey," and thus introduced humour into a campaign that had been strangely deficient in that helpful element, as well as placed a nickname where it must stick while this war should last.

It is believed that our shells fell among the Boers several times during the afternoon. The gun remained on the ridge all night, and defined the extreme left of the next day's battle-ground. This ground extended from the railway where the gun stood, along the ridge facing the Boer kopje, and then, when the ridge ended, straight over the veldt to the river, and along the river two miles, to the southernmost of two bridle fords to the Free State side of the stream.

This position was four miles long from railway to river, and two miles longer beside the river. The ground was different from any on which we had fought before. It was all littered—ridges and veldt alike—with what the Boers call Vaal bushes, shapely little trees from four to seven feet high, of round, full, generous outline and dense foliage, every leaf in which is a silvery green.

In such a veldt before their hill the Boers had two miles of trenches full of men. Beyond this, still to the right, their trenches continued across

the more level and open plain, and then bent at right angles, and followed the river on our side, keeping between us and it.

Thus the trenches protected the kopje first, and gave the Boers freedom to move behind those on the level veldt, in full exposure, yet out of range of our fire, so that they could get to a waggon ford within their lines, and across the river, and down it towards Jacobsdal.

It was not two o'clock in the morning when the last troops to leave the camp moved forward to the edge of the next scene of battle three miles away. The Highland Brigade was ordered to the main position, roughly speaking from the left to the centre. The Guards' Brigade was to continue the line to the river on the right, and the Yorkshires held the drift on the extreme right, with a small break between them and the Guards. A small force of the Mounted Infantry supported the Yorkshires. The main body of this mounted troop went into battle with the Highland Brigade.

At about half-past three o'clock in the morning, after a rainy and bitterly cold night, the Highland Brigade, led by General Wauchope, moved down upon the veldt. It was very dark and still intensely cold.

The men advanced in quarter-column order. It is not a matter of military importance, but it is a fact that they supposed they were to cross the veldt and attack the enemy on the kopje. Therefore it happened that they were at perfect ease, swinging along without a thought of immediate attack, chatting—even to such an extent that their officers bade them make less noise. Neither officers nor men knew of the existence of the formidable trenches that ran along the veldt in front of them.

By one of those unfortunate and irreparable accidents which happen rarely in the British army, two of the men loosed their guns during this short march, and many critics and historians may say that this apprised the Boers of the British approach. It is my belief, however, based on good authority, that the Boers employed a scout to walk ahead and on the extreme right of the British, and flash a light when they reached a certain point which had been agreed upon.

The Scotch battalions—excepting the Gordons, who did not go into battle until later—kept in quarter-column formation, and meeting a line of Vaal bushes, and later a thicket of thorny cactus, deployed out of the way of and around these.

Suddenly the light was flashed on the right, a Boer rifle was fired on the left, and the whole long-hidden trench belched flame, and riddled our ranks with bullets.

Nothing could have been more of a surprise, more unexpected.

A panic seized the troops, and would have possessed any other regiments in any other army —so fearful was the fire, so completely were the men taken off their guard, and so like a general slaughter must it have seemed to those who saw their comrades dropping on both sides, and before them.

They turned and ran, literally colliding and climbing over one another in their confusion.

A chaplain forward in the ranks was knocked down and trampled ; as brave a man as any, and yet one who declared that there lived no men who could have behaved differently.

It had been as if the earth had opened, and from a cleft that ran as far as our men reached fire had belched, and shot had swept the veldt.

Out of two companies of the Black Watch only fifty men escaped ; more than three hundred were the casualties in that regiment.

It was the same with the Seaforths, and almost the same with the others.

The fever of fright lasted only while the men ran two hundred yards, and then they regained some measure of order.

Most of them re-formed their ranks, fell under the commands of their officers, and faced the foe, lying down of course, as must be the case in such warfare.

Even then our advance line was only three hundred and twenty to four hundred yards from the trenches, so close had the Boers allowed us to approach before they revealed themselves.

In this incident lay the pith and almost the sum of the battle as far as the infantry were concerned. Our casualties at the end of a day of fifteen hours were about nine hundred, and yet not above a hundred of these were inflicted upon us after that first three minutes—three minutes which saw the equal of a battalion swept away!

Then the Guards' Brigade advanced on the right to a point at which they could have demolished a visible enemy, and there they waged hot battle all that day.

The Gordons were sent forward early in the

day, and met with a thrilling adventure at the start. Their route took them to the middle of the field, where they passed a Boer trench without provoking attack, or sign of its existence. After they had gone by, and begun to meet the fierce fire of the foe in the main entrenchment ahead of them, the Boers in the rear trench, who were slightly to the right, opened an enfilading fire, so that they were battered with volleys from front, rear, and side. They fell upon their faces after a loss which seems trifling beside that of their compatriots earlier in the day—thirty or forty casualties of all kinds.

A more characteristic incident, far more agreeable to record, was that which occurred still later in the day, when a composite party of Scotchmen —Argyles, Seaforths, and others—actually advanced to the Boer trenches, inflicting more damage than they suffered.

But it was an artillery fight, and had been planned as such. The Boers used few guns. Taught by past experience that their guns have played a small part as aids to them, and on the other hand, have always drawn heavy and accurate fire from us, they brought only four into action. They had two in use on the kopje, and one in the

rear of their centre on the veldt, but they did us no damage with either.

We, on the other hand, made splendid use of our great naval gun, our howitzer battery, horse artillery, and three field batteries of the Royal Artillery. The great gun directed its fire mainly on the kopje, and we were told afterwards that the damage it did was very great. It is said that one shell fell among forty Boers, of whom only five remained unhurt. Another destroyed a laager. It seemed that by the close of the day nearly the whole face of the hill had been under this fire.

The howitzer battery helped in the work, and shelled the trenches as well. The horse artillery was actually brought into the heavy rifle fire of the enemy, and raked their trenches lengthwise and crosswise with terrible effect. This action was carried out in the very jaws of death, and then, as from our first battle to our last, the pluck and intrepidity of our artillerymen impressed every soldier among us.

At half-past four o'clock large numbers of Boers were seen leaving the farther side of the kopje, and moving toward the river and Free State border. Whether they were retreating, which was probably the fact, or were setting out to attempt

a flank attack upon our position, we did not know. That such an attack was in their minds we strongly suspected. At all events, they found the Guards and the King's Own Yorkshires controlling the drifts, and stoutly resisting the Boer fire all along the river. A very fierce attack was made upon their extreme right in an undoubted effort to break through our line and flank us.

Five companies of the Yorkshires were moved up to support them at this point, and the Boers abandoned their project. The Yorkshiremen had not disappointed those who had learned to look to them for valorous activity in every fight. They had been sent to guard a drift, and had found the Boers not only holding it, but also in possession of a ridge and two houses that were upon it well on the near side of the river. The Yorkshiremen stormed this ridge and took it. Their casualties for the whole day were only nine. Lord Methuen complimented them upon their part in the battle.

On this part of the field—the extreme right—the mounted infantry were bringing in the wounded towards the close of the day, when the Boers attacked them furiously. Three of the mounted infantry—all men of the Yorkshire

Regiment serving in the mounted corps—are declared to have made it possible for this humane work to continue. They are Sergeant Cassen, Lance-Corporal Bennett, and Private Mawhood. They knelt down time after time in the open, and with utter disregard for their own lives did all they could by firing continuously and steadily.

There was no lack of courage on that great field, and it distinguished high and humble alike. Now it was the colonel of the Gordons standing erect and calling on his men until a bullet felled him ; now the Scotch private, who was found with his foot smashed, and was carried away by stretcher-bearers, while he loudly protested that he had been wounded twelve hours, had kept on fighting all the time, and was still as fit as any man to face the foe.

At sundown our infantry retired. It is true that a large fraction—the major part, perhaps—of the Boers had done the same an hour earlier. They fired a few shells at us as we withdrew, and our guns answered them, and so were able to claim the last notes in the tumult of battle.

On the next day and the next we gathered in

our dead; roughly speaking but little over a hundred, though scattered over six miles of the veldt. The Boers searched our ambulance and stretcher men, and blindfolded all whose duty led them near the trenches. Unfortunately, one man was found with a revolver upon him, and he and the surgeon-major in charge of the party were taken prisoners, and led into the Boer camp.

But for his manner, the Red Cross man who had carried a pistol might have been set free as the doctor was, but he irritated the Boers, and they sent him to Pretoria. This incident over, the relations between the Boers and our ambulance people assumed a very agreeable phase. The Boers were courteous, helpful, and respectful. By not one word did they give offence. This was evidently the effect of our unfailing fairness throughout the war, of our generosity when they asked for medical aid after earlier battles, of the dignified tone in which Lord Methuen had complained of their earlier breaches of the conventions of civilised warfare.

Unquestionably the most shocking episode of the war on the western side of the continent was the disaster to the Highland Brigade at Maaghersfontein.

The catastrophe was so peculiar that, had the censorship permitted an account of it to be cabled home, it would have been difficult to deal with it. There were two good reasons for this. In the first place, it was no easy matter to judge how much could be made public without lasting injury to the Scotch regiments, for the shock they suffered was far greater than has been made known.

Lord Methuen, too, maintained absolute silence, while the Scotch camps rang with criticism, and even denunciation, of the part he was suspected of having taken. This was natural in men who had suffered as they had—indeed, even if it was misapplied, their strength of feeling at such a moment did them credit.

The truth, and, in all probability, a great deal beyond the truth, respecting certain phases of the disaster has been exploited in published letters, written by private soldiers to their people at home, and there is no longer need for such reticence as was reasonable before these events had passed into the province of history. Even now, without Lord Methuen's version the sad story must be incomplete.[1]

The Scotch maintain that when General

[1] Lord Methuen's version is given in the Appendix.

Wauchope returned to his quarters on the night before the battle, after receiving his orders from Lord Methuen, he was seen to be troubled.

To one of his intimates he is said to have remarked that his instructions were so vague that he protested, and asked for fuller, more definite orders, and that Lord Methuen was displeased, and in reply reminded him that as chief in command he had given what orders seemed best to him.

The Scotch account goes on to say that in obedience to these orders the Brigade was moved forward into battle in quarter column formation.

During the march it is said that General Wauchope exclaimed more than once, "this is madness!" Finally, just before the disaster, he declared again that to advance as he was doing, in close formation, against an unlocated enemy, was mad business, and that, orders or no orders, he would spread his men out in open formation.

He gave the order. It was carried to the first battalion, the Black Watch, but before it could be executed the troops "found themselves in a

butcher's shop," as one Scotch Tommy expressed it.

Some have said that the Boers had allowed our men to approach to within fifty yards of their trenches, but the distance varies with every account from fifty to three hundred yards. The men, who were seized with panic, saw their comrades fall on either side and in front of them, and —they ran.

It is needless to enlarge upon that distressing event. They ran back. They were overcome. They did not distinguish between their officers and their comrades. There was panic, disorder, chaos. They had suffered a surprise and a shock such as perhaps no such mass of men has known in modern times.

Whoever criticises them must remember that on many terrible fields, through a long and glorious history, they have won the right to be regarded as among the bravest troops in the world.

When the disaster occurred—according to the Scotch story—General Wauchope said, "I hope my men will not hold me responsible for this."

Whether he was shot early in the struggle or

some hours later no one appears to be certain. Most of his faithful followers think that he was among the first to die, but I have never heard that this pious belief rests upon the word of any witness.

On the other hand, one private declares that some hours after the first shock of the fight the General, restive under the too-prolonged tension caused by the incessant fire of the Boers, declared that he was going to jump up, run back, and re-assume the active conduct of his brigade. He did so, according to this account, accompanied by four other men, two of whom were slain then with their brave General. I cannot vouch for either account from my own knowledge, but just as one refrains from painting the complete picture of the consequences of the first shock to the Highlanders, so must one curb all inclination to picture the subsequent grief of the Brigade, and its anger against those to whom the men attributed their ill fortune.

Two points must be cleared up before the full truth can be got at. First, did or did not General Wauchope believe he was to advance a great distance farther than the point where he was attacked, to an entirely different part of the field, over to

the right of the kopje and around it? Next, did he know that the Boers were entrenched on the veldt in front of the kopje; or did Methuen know this and omit to make it clear to Wauchope?

Outside the Scotch Brigade it is said that both the Lieutenant-General and the Brigadier-General knew the fact, but the Scotch are convinced this was not the case, and so, rather than trespass on angry ground, it is best to leave the question open, as indeed it is.

More absurdities, and even downright inventions and lies, have been current about this matter than about anything else that has taken place in the war, but as I have enjoyed peculiar facilities for learning whatever is reliable, I trust that my statement of what actually took place will be found to be so clear, and void of ornament and bias, as not to call for contradiction or correction in any important detail.

Some idea of the terrors of the situation in which the Highlanders found themselves, while marching wholly unprepared for assault, may be gained from the following figures, the record of a surprise and attack which lasted only a minute, or at the most three minutes. The much slighter

losses of the Gordons, who escaped this awful trap, are purposely excluded from the calculation.

Regiment.	Officers and Men Killed.	Wounded	Missing.	Prisoners.	Total.
2nd Black Watch	73	218 [1]	38	25	354
Highland Light Infantry	15	77	3	...	95
1st Argyll & Sutherlandshires	26	61	18	1	106
2nd Seaforths	48	141	...	8	197
Totals	162	497	59 [2]	34 [2]	752

It must be understood distinctly that quite a different account of this disaster is given by the men of the 42nd, or Black Watch, who deny that they can be justly associated with the panic which seized portions of the brigade.

They insist that they had already begun to

[1] In this number (218) are 10 wounded men taken prisoners by the Boers.

[2] The Boers took 79 prisoners, including 10 wounded and 14 whose names were given to the British immediately after the battle. The names of the rest were not known to the enemy. They claimed to have buried 15 Highlanders, and this number, with the 45 prisoners whose names were not known, would account for one more than the 59 missing.

carry out General Wauchope's order for a wider and looser formation, and that when the shock came their ranks were over-lapping at the ends, as one moved forward to extend the one in front.

They assert that they then lay down, and kept their position, very few joining in the retiring movement.

They say further that the men of their battalion, who were found dead in such numbers close to the Boer trenches, were not killed by the first surprising fire, but met death during the after-course of the battle.

The Seaforths also claim to have held their position through the awful catastrophe, and an officer of note, whose name I am not at liberty to mention, says that it seems to him that the Black Watch and the Seaforths presented very nearly their full strength, as he saw them shortly after the great shock.

This officer received some orders from General Wauchope soon after the surprise. He went off to deliver them, returned in a very few minutes, and could then see nothing of the General. He himself fell wounded at the moment, and knows no more.

There are as many stories as there were men

in the battle, and I pass over all but the above, which come from such sources, and are so blended with a demand for justice to those who missed the panic, that I include them rather than even seem unfair.

CHAPTER XX

THE MESS OF THE WESSEX FUSILIERS

IT was interesting, when no actual fighting was afoot, to notice the social habits of our gallant officers.

We are at mess with, let us say, the Wessex Fusiliers.

This officers' mess is very proud of itself, because it has commandeered a lot of boards, and built a table twenty feet long and three feet wide, with a bench running along either side of it. Next it has borrowed the canvas cover of an ammunition waggon, and spread this out over six posts so as to shade the table at high noon.

In the morning the fierce African sun blinds all who are on the southern side of the table, and in the afternoon the ferocious glow of it broils and dizzies all who sit on the northern bench. If we move our legs along the boards we get splinters

in them. If we lean on the table we get jam-stains on our khaki sleeves. But that doesn't matter much now. If you had lost a company in three rounds of the war, if you had missed your bravest companions, and sent their things home to their wives, or down to the hospital at Wynberg, if you thought the chances were that you would not be alive yourself the day after to-morrow, what would you care whether you ripped your breeches on a nail, or whether it was marmalade or Cape jam that has stuck your coat-sleeve to the table?

The colonel is a stickler for promptness. If you are going to sit with frizzled eyeballs at his mess, if you are going to tear your breeches and soil your sleeves at his table you must be there sharp at six. Then you will be invited up close to him, where you can use his funny little mustard-pot that looks like a box of ointment, and you can borrow his big tablespoon to stir your sugar in your tea, while the majors and the captains look on green with envy—and maybe the colonel will fill his sparklet with diluted mud and a Mauser bullet full of carbolic gas, to drive your whisky and mud and sand down your throat—your chicken-like throat which has swallowed

sand until it might be a tube of emery-paper.

"Don't walk on the windward side of the table —you, I mean," says the colonel to a soldier servant. "What's your name? Well, you're always kicking up the sand and letting it blow all over our food." (Then turning to his guests): "Now, in India, the native servants——"

"I heard the firing this afternoon," says the major to a captain across the table; "scouting party of the Lancers, eh? Any one hurt?"

"All got away but one," says the captain. "Dumfries was killed with the first shot. At that the others ran—except a private, who dragged the captain out of range. But he was dead; they only saved his body."

"What's that?" says the colonel; "not Dumfries, who led those fellows so well at Belmont? I'm really very sorry."

"He was cousin to Mannering of 'ours,' sir," says somebody at the far end of the table, "and Mannering had invited him to dine here to-night."

"Really, sir," says the major, "that cook of ours does make excellent soup. Never tasted better in my life."

"Bolter always said so, too," says the colonel. "Harris, you saw the adjutant last. How is he? Not very serious, I hope."

"The doctor told me he could not rejoin us for some months, sir; he's pretty bad."

"Ah," says the colonel; "he'll hate to lose the rest of this. All the men will miss him, but not so much as he will miss seeing this show out."

"By George," say I; "what is war? Is it dehumanising? What is soldiering? Does it make men wooden? Here I've been miserably broken up for days about the adjutant, and you talk about his getting three serious wounds as you would talk about an eclipse of the moon."

"Don't misjudge us," says the captain next to me. "We are used to killing and wounding, and we learn to seem to treat it lightly. It's only seeming, I assure you. If a man's shot here in battle we say little because we have to set an example to the subalterns and the men. Nothing else would do. If men of less intimacy with us died on the polo ground, or in their beds at home, and we were in times of peace, you would see whether we are wood——"

"The soup is good enough," says a voice halfway down the table, "but it's nothing—it's not

a patch on the way Weldon would cook it. Devil as he is in barracks, and up to mischief as he is—up to his neck—when nothing's on, he is a wonder to cook."

"Gentlemen," says the colonel, "there are no smokes in the mess. We have sent to Logan's car, and there are none to be had there. But I have—Bedford, get my cigarettes from out of my dickshee in my tent. They are done up in a towel under the dishes because some pilferer—some Kaffir, I suspect—took my other box. When they come I'll ask each of you to take two and pass the box along. Why, Major—bless me, I thought you were not coming. Gentlemen, Major Downrig. We have finished dinner. Really, you should come at the proper time. I told you twice that we dine sharp at six. However, if you will come late you must not expect anything. Bedford—Bedford! where the deuce is Bedford? I say, Private Hammond, go and tell the mess sergeant that I have a friend to dine with me, and I hope there is some soup—the soup was excellent, Major, but now it is probably like ice water and tallow—and, Hammond, tell the sergeant to serve whatever there is. The potatoes were very fine—and there should be some of that

rabbit the men caught—and bring back the pickles. Major, you really should not come at half-past seven when dinner is at six."

"Upon my word, it is too bad," the major replied; "but, you see, it was for all the world like going back to Tirah. I was out with Colonel Rose to locate a place for a heliograph, and suddenly we were being sniped. We had two of Rimington's men with us, and one was copped, and the other had his horse shot, and then he was bowled over himself, dead as a doornail."

"By Jove! you don't say?"

"But I do, and I was an hour getting help, and getting the body away. However, we got it, and here we are, thank God, and I'm none the worse, though they did give us a surprise—that I can swear. Why, how do you do, Mr. *Daily Mail?* Thank you very much for the Nestors. 'Pon my word, I never can thank you enough. I was down to Boer tobacco when you sent them—and I'm the man who swore that if any man smoked Boer tobacco in my club I'd cut him, if he was my best friend."

It was my pet dandy, and I had not recognised him—the man I used to see at Orange River, in new khaki serge, with blazing stars on his

shoulders, with lustrous buttons, with gaiters and boots freshly dressed twice a day, with gloves—the only man who wore gloves as far north as Orange River; with rings, and a jewelled flask, and a provoking habit of taking everybody to his tent to see his Pasteur filter and his aluminium eating kit; the dazzling dandy of Methuen's column.

And now—now that dandies are as extinct as dodoes—is it any wonder I did not know him? His stars were gone. His buttons were dingy. His coat was stained, and the left-hand pocket was torn half-way down. His single eyeglass was as murky as a Whitechapel window in December. He had not shaved for weeks. He was sitting on splinters, and leaning on Cape jam, and he didn't care. He was like the rest of us—dirty, shabby, unkempt, unshorn. He was capable of writing to the Hon. Lady Anne Broadstairs, but not of letting her see him. He was like the rest of us, blending with the veldt, melting into the desert colour, going without a razor, a bath, or a brush of any sort. But he was none the worse for that, and, pray God, may no one think any of us are.

"I always shave before going into action," said

the colonel, "on account of the example to the men."

"I used to," said the major, "till the men stole my razors. But, 'pon honour, old man, I do wash. I washed all over—let me see when it was. Oh, yes, it was at Honey Nest Kloof, the day before Modder River fight. I got two buckets, and went out two hundred yards away from the camp, and I stripped and—no, first I washed my undershirt and shirt in one pail, and then I washed myself. It was a rude shock to me, but no harm came of it."

CHAPTER XXI

THE PADRE AND OUR FRIEND THE ENEMY

THE man of us all who knew the foe best was Padre Robertson, chaplain of the Highland Brigade, welcome mess-fellow with valiant Wauchope, man among men, and man of God.

Towards the close of each battle, before the Boers had done killing us, and before we had stopped firing at nothing all day long, Padre Robertson mounted a horse and rode over to the enemy's lines to ask permission to gather in our dead and wounded.

"I knew they wouldn't harm me," he said to me once, "because they could see by my riding right up to them that I was either a minister or a madman."

Ah, but there's good stuff in our padres! Think of the behaviour of the one called Hill at Belmont. The Grenadiers were still scaling the

steep and rocky kopje like flies, and the leaden drift of bullets was still whistling down from the Boer eyries as the wind of a gale searches the deck and rigging of a ship. But Padre Hill was there, moving from man to man, lifting a head here, and giving water there, and, once, actually standing up, book in hand, reading the office for the dying.

"Go back, padre, go back!" said an officer, "this is no place for a man of your calling; you've no right to risk your life here."

"No," said he, "I'm in my right place here."

But, as I was about to say, Padre Robertson went over to the Boer lines either three or four days after the battle of Maagersfontein, and got to know more about the enemy in action than any man I have yet seen. He told me that there were Englishmen, Irishmen, and Scotchmen among them, as well as the mercenary Germans and Scandinavians, serving for a gold Kruger a day—which is to say a pound sterling Dutch. He found ministers among them of the Reformed Presbyterian, or Dutch Reformed, faith, who got their professional training in Scotland. Everybody was courteous to our padre, and he found many well-dressed men of polished manners, distinctly men of the better

class. Some tried to argue, saying that the war was being waged for the sake of a few capitalists and mining speculators, but our padre would not argue.

"I am neither a politeecian nor a soldier," said he, with his rich accent, "I am but joost a meenister o' God, come to fetch away the dead."

They blindfolded all the ambulance men and stretcher-bearers who were obliged to go within five hundred yards of their trenches, and led them hither and thither to gather the dead, but they did not blindfold the padre. Nor did they put him under oath as to what he might tell or hide. One day they said that if he would give his word to bring back a list of the Boers taken by us they would furnish such a list of the English whom they held.

He carried out his promise, and perceived that they have a nearly perfect identification department, and system of tracing all who are in their army, no matter what befalls them; and this is a department not possessed by every other army in the world, to put the case so as not to offend any one in particular.

It has been told how, when this humane work was going on, on the morning after the day of

battle, our big naval gun burst out, and flung a lyddite shell over into the enemy's lines. The Boers were surprised and nonplussed at that, but the padre assured them it was all a mistake, and cantered back to his own lines to have the firing stopped.

"You'll become a Boer yet," said an officer of high rank, "if you keep going over to them after each fight."

"No fear of that," said the padre, "but I'm bound to say they've been very courteous and good and kind to me, and very helpful as well."

His experiences in that field were almost too shocking for description. The sun was playing havoc with the dead, and the ambulance men, uninspired with the fervent zeal of our padre, turned sick, and were only kept in a condition to work by a liberal supply of spirits.

On the final day even the padre was overcome, and then—what do you think? Some kindly Boers came out of the trenches and held his head, until the first violence of the nausea was spent.

From an ambulance man I heard an anecdote of quaint flavour. The Boers rode out to him and chatted with him as he did his work.

"Have you any water in your bottle?" they asked, adding, "we are very thirsty."

The Briton said he had water in one bottle, and whisky and water in another.

"I'll give you the whisky and water," said he, "if you'll say, 'God bless the Queen.'"

"We've no objection," one Boer replied; "we've nothing against the Queen. Let's have the whisky."

He lifted the khaki-clad bottle, drank, and said, "God bless the Queen." The second man took the bottle, drank a deep draught, and echoed the prayer of the first. The third man kept the promise—but in a peculiar way. He drank, and, pausing before he handed back the bottle, said, "God bless the Queen, and ——— Cecil Rhodes."

I talked to several of our men during the days when we were taking in our dead and wounded, and heard much about the Boers. Not one had been seen to wear a uniform. They were clad precisely as so many men would be if gathered up in city streets and country roads. After they left the trenches it was seen that every man had a horse, that nearly all the horses were very good ones, and that the Boers sat them like centaurs, "so graceful and easy-like," as one man put it.

When we get to the point where we can write and speak freely of the Boer's defects, it will be time to tell the other side of the story of the Boer upon the battle-field. For there is another side—no matter how "gude and helpfu' and courteous" they have been to brave Padre Robertson.

CHAPTER XXII

CHRISTMAS WITH METHUEN'S ARMY

"THE Boers are going to their homes to spend Christmas," was the news we read one day from all the points where our armies were centred. Some men might have been cross, or even jealous, under the circumstances ; but we saw the humour of the situation, realising that even if we could slip out of our trenches to foregather with our loved ones at home, we should have to travel four weeks, and seven thousand miles to clasp hands with them.

Of course, we of Lord Methuen's army celebrated the day after our own fashion, and worked ourselves up to enjoy it almost as if it were the genuine article.

I shall describe the day in camp, and though most of its features were precisely the same as they would have been on any other day, the record

may be none the less interesting on that account.

After you have lived in a tent a few weeks, if you can call it living, the untying of the flap is as certain to wake you as would be the smashing in of your front door in London. You hear the strings being pulled out of their bow knots, and presently there is the squeezing, surging noise of a man pushing his way in, as if you were living in a drum, and he was breaking through it. He is your soldier servant, and he remarks, "gun fire, sir; I've brought your cocoa, sir."

Your soldier servant! What a good fellow he is! You were told before you took him into your employ at eighteenpence a day that he was not precisely without a mark against his name, that at home in barracks he was one of the dare-devils of the battalion—apt to slip out of a second or third story window, and come back tipsy, and say to some officer he met, "Good morning sir; you're a —— good soldier, sir." But if you didn't mind these eccentricities, and would employ him, you would find him willing, clever, respectful, worth his weight in gold as a servant, precisely as he is worth the same amount as a fighting man.

"And I have brought your cocoa, sir," he says.

"I was out on piquet all night, sir; but I got sent in this morning ahead of the rest with a message, sir. Had a bit of fun last night, sir. My captain happened to mention that he might be hungry an hour or two after dark, as he hadn't had nothing all day. So me and another chap we came across a house, and we came across a duck and a pigeon and a hen, and then we looked for some vegetables, and came across some potatoes and onions and carrots. And then we came across a pot to cook 'em in, and a couple of plates, sir—which came in very handy. And when the captain came along he said we gave him the finest 'raggoo' he believed he had ever eat, sir. He said he wouldn't ask no questions how we had come across such things as was in the 'raggoo,' and as he didn't ask any questions he didn't get no lies.

"Breakfast at half-past six, sir; shall I call you at six?"

"Do," and with the word I sink back into slumber between my goatskin carosse and my blanket, both still necessary, for the night was bitter cold, and the sun has not yet warmed the air.

At six the servant comes again with a bucket of water, so coated with dust that the fluid is the

colour of khaki. But what of that? So is the soap, and so is the towel—indeed, the very balloon sent to us from England is khaki-coloured. It was painted so, but it would have soon turned so if it had been let alone. We wash and dress, and go out to breakfast. Between us and the mess-table is the kitchen. The ladies at home should see that kitchen of the officers' mess of the Yorkshire Light Infantry, which has turned out soup that Lord Methuen has praised, and viands we have not been a bit ashamed to offer to him and his brigadiers.

This serviceable kitchen consists of a sort of bonfire, around and on top of which are set half a dozen Flanders kettles—oval black pots about a foot high, and eight or nine inches wide in the middle. In one of these porridge is cooking, in another tea, in others coffee, milk, bloaters, and the like. Soldiers in their shirt-sleeves are chopping wood, stirring the pots, frying the bacon, and serving out the food to the servants. The mess-sergeant's tent is near by—a little provision shop, in and before which are boxes and chests of biscuits, cake, tinned goods of almost every sort, sauces, beer, spirits, bread, and other edibles—milk and butter being wholly missing.

Already the intense heat of the day is on everything, and yet, because we are among soldiers, every man wears his coat, and wears it buttoned to the chin. The officers are all used to buttoned-up suffocation, and deserve no credit; but every morning I pat myself on the back, and declare that it is almost as courageous for me to put my coat on my fevered, sweltering body, and then button it up, as it is for a professional warrior to go into battle.

A dozen or so of the officers are round their rude mess table, each with his soldier-servant behind him, or passing between the kitchen and the table.

"Merry Christmas!" "Merry Christmas!" comes from every throat, and heartily is the greeting shouted back. I look at them all and wonder how they appeared in London, or in Yorkshire, when last they were at home. Certainly not as they appeared now in their old and stained khaki, with here and there a beard or a blistered nose, and everywhere hands and faces tanned and tinted like mahogany.

How modest and unassuming, how frank and brotherly they are, these sterling fellows who have been in the heat of four battles, have been thinned

in mess and ranks by shocking losses, and yet are as eager for the next fray as the newest regiment out here. I know no other regiment so well, for I have lived with this since Methuen's start; but I suppose these men are simply types of British officers. I know that never a man in our mess has grumbled or complained. I have seen the unvarying eagerness with which each man has heard that a battle was on for next day. After any engagement each has told of his part in it as calmly as an architect would tell of a day's work in an office.

But wonderful as these men seem to me, they are but British officers. And in an army made up of the best regiments there must be many a mess like this.

The talk is of the big plum-pudding that has been sent up from Capetown for the officers. The Queen's chocolate for the men has not yet come, and makeshift puddings are to be made in camp.

There will be champagne at the officers' dinner, and a tot of spirits is to be served to every Tommy. Frankly, we find it a little difficult to talk of Christmas, with nothing to remind us of it except a promise of pudding, and a distant view of a white-robed clergyman talking to a double line

of soldiers on the veldt. Breakfast over, most of us linger at the table. Under it at one end is a packing-case filled with newspapers and pictorial weeklies.

A subaltern shouts aloud with joy, as he stirs up the collection and brings to view an *Illustrated Mail* that he had not seen before. The rest of us look for papers we have not seen, but no such luck is to come to any of us, and so we fall to with our tongues.

"Shop" is almost our only theme. Sometimes we get well on with a conversation of other sorts, but invariably a new-comer drops in and says that our balloon is being sent up, or the new 4·7 gun has come, and—off we go upon the war. To-day, for a change, we get up an uncommon strong interest in a new subject—sports for New Year's Day. That I take it is a topic that never fell flat in a British company.

The work of the regiment goes on during Christmas as on every other day. The piquets go out, relieving those who are to come in. The men are taken to bathe in the river, even a detachment is sent to help the Engineers in building a trench.

Some of us, who are not Tommies, go for a ride with the colonel, or stroll over to hear the

best of the Scotch pipers play, or if we read a novel or write a letter, these things only show that in solemn truth all there is to be of Christmas is the dinner—and our thoughts of home.

Suddenly there is a tremendous cheering, like that of the Israelites of old shouting some city's walls to ruins, like what there is to be when the Boers and British come to the end of this argument. I rush from my tent to see all the regiment drawn up before its camp—and all the Black Watch before their camp—and all the Argylls across the railway drawn up in battalion formation in front of their tents—and all cheering.

Why, every man there in khaki is out and cheering. "What's it all about?" I ask. "They're cheering the Queen"—a beautiful annual custom of which I confess I'd never heard. Her Majesty's greeting arrives on the moment, and when it has been read it is cheered with yet another mighty ringing roar.

And so we come to lunch in our windy, dusty, and hot rendezvous, and pleasantry and good spirits flow among us, for we have all been thrilled by that outburst of cheers.

"Ah, here is the general now," says Colonel Barter, and leaves us to go out upon the veldt

and welcome Pole-Carew and his aide, smartly dressed, alert, soldierly in face and bearing, glance and speech. He has come to visit each company at dinner, and give the season's greeting to the men. He goes down the line to the end tent of each row, where the sergeants are eating. He looks into each tent door, and says he hopes they are having a good dinner, and he wishes them a merry Christmas. He varies the words from place to place, but never the sentiment. He hears there is pudding, and it is shown to him. He says he is sorry the Royal chocolate did not come, and that he regrets there is no beer to be had. Always the men struggle to rise, and each time he says, "no, please sit still," or "don't get up."

This kindly ceremony over, there is only dinner to look forward to. If it does not blow or rain we know that all is certain to go well. The elements prove kindly, the pudding is perfect, the coffee and Benedictine taste like nectar, and all are now so cheery and near to the Christmas spirit that it is an hour later than usual when the little band of brother braves scatters in the darkness and the desert dirt.

CHAPTER XXIII

TRAITS OF MODERN BATTLE

WAR has as many faces and phases as Dame Fortune herself. For weeks we of Lord Methuen's force were aptly described as a flying column—a flying and fighting column we were, leaping northward, and dealing blows right and left as we coursed.

We were not sure of our meals in those days; in fact, we were more nearly certain of not getting them. We came to a pause after the fight on the Modder, but the fever was still on us, and presently "up and at them" was the cry, and we fought the biggest battle of all four at Maaghersfontein.

After that the wind went out of our sails, and we waited for a new supply of men and munitions. We seemed to have leased this little watering-

place from the Kimberley folk, whose holiday or health retreat it used to be.

If we used cards in the army we would have had new ones printed with this address. We made ourselves at home here. A market had been established for us, and we had fresh eggs and genuine milk, new vegetables and butter, to say nothing of formal dinners to our generals and our friends from other messes. Books came into camp, and we read and lent them around.

Our horses were used only for afternoon rides, and there were even men among us who fished at times in the river—which in other respects had become a laundry and a horse trough, where the foot soldiers washed their khaki, and the troopers watered their steeds.

I would not risk giving any one the idea that we were idle. I believe time was that soldiers lounged and dawdled a great deal—hence the term "sojering" applied to a lazy mechanic who avoids hard work. But those were not even nineteenth-century soldiers, and here we were within hail of the twentieth century. No, we truly thought that we were having an easy time, but the term was merely comparative. Tommy had to take his turn at picket duty—one night in four

—at trench digging, at scouting, or patrol work if he is a mounted man. He had to cook and wash, and undergo inspection, and be up at daybreak, and look after his rifle and accoutrements. Other hundreds of men kept Army Service stores, and dealt out forage and rations, clothes, boots, putties; and did blacksmithing, horse-shoeing, harness-mending, carpentering, and I know not what all; while the engineers built trenches and bridges, mended culverts and the railway road-bed, and put in order the tanks and windmills that got comminuted fractures in the last great battle. In all the world there are not many trades as active and laborious as this same "soldiering," which once bore such a poor nickname.

The queer thing about us was that we were making ourselves believe that we were at rest; and our surroundings helped to strengthen the delusion. For our surroundings formed a complete picture of peace; they symbolised calm and leisure; they wore a Sabbath air of village restfulness.

The men who report for the *Daily Mail*, the *Times*, Reuter's, the *Morning Post*, *Black and White*, and one or two other publications, moved their mule trunks into a queer little mud-walled

hotel on the "island," where the Modder marries the Riet.

This is considered, I was told, the Bournemouth of Kimberley, and in other years the riverside trees have sheltered many tents and camps of summer loiterers from the diamond fields, while the Kimberley belles and beaux have haunted the darker corners of my stoep at night, and the music of violin and piano and of dancing boots has tickled the air of the dining-room, while the soberer men have studied coloured cards and jingled coins at tables in the bedrooms. I am afraid these folk would not know the place this year any more than I can imagine it as they have known it. A shrapnel shell burst in the dining-room, another ventilated the bedroom of the *Times*, and a third has made a new window in the wall of Number 5. All the walls are rendered like the tops of so many pepper-pots by Mauser bullets, and in a storm it always rains harder in the hotel than outside.

However, stand with me on my stoep. The green trees of the riverside are bathed in sunshine, and trembling in a soft breeze. They are so small that we can look over them to the other trees around the store, the station, and the Crown, and

Royal Hotel. The veldt lies at one side, and far away are many lines of tents, which ought, perhaps, to suggest war, but yet manage to increase the note of rest and order, quiet and calm, which sweetly pervades everything else.

The farthest object is a ganger's hut on the railway to the left, and then the view closes with a soft, rolling, purple line of hills. The level, yellow veldt, the village among the trees, the brilliant blue sky, with white clouds lazily afloat beneath it and the smooth undulating bluish hills, how perfect a scene of peace these make.

Now saddle up two horses and ride with me to the ganger's hut. Why, hello! there's a huge khaki-coloured cannon the shape of a hock bottle! And a lot of men in strange, broad-brimmed hats are standing near it. They are men of the Naval Brigade, and the gun is a 4·7 from the *Doris*.

"Did you ever see any Boers?" an officer calls out to us.

"Very few," say I; "just the prisoners we have taken"—for we are fighting an invisible foe, as every one knows by this time.

"Well, have a look through this." He taps the gun's telescope as he speaks, and we look through it.

"Heavens! are those Boers?" We see them all over the hills in numbers, like plant-lice on a leaf. They are all over the hills—riding, walking, sitting in groups, looking over redoubts, digging trenches, passing water up the slope—the little range of purple breasts is alive with busy Boers.

Then we must have been mistaken about the peacefulness of this place. Peace where all those Boers are! There has been no peace in Africa since the Boers came here; no peace for the British since they became the Boers' neighbours.

We are to lunch with the Guards, and we shall be late if we do not hurry. Ah, here's their mess tent, and they have begun to eat. Welcomed, and places made for us, we seat ourselves and are served with soup. Boom! soof—soof—soof—soof—soof—soof—ooogh! The boom is the noise of a big gun, the soof—soof is the shell tearing through the air; the ooogh—precisely like a cough—is the bursting of the shell.

"That's our Joey," says the colonel; "let us see where the shell strikes! By Jove! a pretty shot—plumb where they have their 40-pounder!"

"Boom!" from the Boer gun on the right; "Ugh!" from its shell, which sends up a fountain spray of sand near the ganger's hut.

"Didn't burst," says a captain.

"Devilish good range, though!" says another. And now we are all out of the tent, sending for glasses, forgetting our lunch, intent upon this gigantic duel.

How frequently did this happen? How often was this vale of pastoral peace startled by such sounds and ferment? Oh, as a rule, every morning with a shot or two; every afternoon with from half an hour to two hours' firing, and then again at odd and unexpected hours on odd and unlooked-for days. We shook the Boers up at eleven o'clock the other night. We had set our big guns by daylight to hit their best positions, and a battery of 12-pounders to rake their trenches.

Then, suddenly, when it was near midnight, we let fly. Our 12-pounders sent a hail of shrapnel shot into their trenches, and they imagined that our infantry were shooting, so a mile or two of men in their trenches opened fire on the black night, and satisfied us of their state of nervousness. I say satisfied us, because on the previous night they had loosed a mile or two of rifles far on our right for no reason that we could discover, though an ingenious theorist in

camp holds that a mule must have strayed up against the barbed-wire strung along before their trenches.

We had merely exchanged a round or two of civilities with our neighbours, and flattered ourselves that this would suffice for the day, for, as a rule, these things are left to us, and it is we who make the welkin ring. An hour or two later one hundred and fifty Reservists came to join the Yorkshire Light Infantry, and were paraded well forward on the veldt, to be seen and addressed by the Brigadier-General. They were spread along in a lengthy double line, and the Boers must have thought them threatening, for bang! came a solid shell into the veldt five hundred yards before them. It was comical then to note how the older men, experienced in this war, aired their experience before the new-comers.

"That's nothing," they said; "mustn't think anything of that. We have that every hour or two. You'll soon get used to it. We have it at night, too; but you mustn't get jumpy when the shells come rattling among the tents, because, really, there's no harm at all in them Boer shells."

In this way we alternately revelled in peace and in war—going out a few miles and destroying some

farmhouses which were proven nests of sniping Boers, or watching a Boer patrol which rode interestingly near one of our naval guns. Now it was at daybreak that we sent them our compliments, and next we were "boomed" out of bed and forced to dress twice in an hour at midnight, as we heard the roar of great guns and the crackle of artillery. On Christmas alone, of all the days since we took to the field, we enjoyed a full day of uninterrupted peace.

CHAPTER XXIV

SCENES AND SOUNDS OF MODERN WAR

THE pictures of our battles which are produced in illustrated papers are not at all like real scenes at the front.

Art cannot keep pace with the quick advances of science, and illustrators find that for effect they must still put as much smoke and confusion in their battle studies as went with the old pictures of Waterloo. If this were left out the public would be disappointed, and unable to tell a battlefield from a parade.

Lately a picture in one of our leading papers, by a very capable artist, showed the British storming a Boer position. In the middle distance was a Boer battery, and the only gunner left alive was standing up with a bandage round his head, while smoke and flame and flying fragments of shells filled the air in his vicinity. In the rush of

the instant he must have been bandaged by the same shot that struck him, and as for the smoke and flying *débris*, there was more of this in a corner of that picture than was to be seen in all the four battles we have fought!

What then is a modern battle—how does it look and sound?

Really, the field of operations is so extensive, and the range of modern guns is so great, that fighting conditions have altered, until there is no longer any general "noise of battle hurtled in the air," no possibility of grasping or viewing an engagement from any single point.

You may hear one of our big guns loosed three miles over on the right, and another two miles on the left. If you are near they make a tremendous noise, yet I have not heard any explosion so loud as a good strong clap of thunder. The guns of the enemy cough far in front of you, and their shells burst within your lines with a louder sound—but with no real crash or deafening roar.

Our guns at their muzzles create but little smoke, though our lyddite shells throw up clouds of dust and smoke where they fall miles away. Because the Boers are using old-fashioned powder

in their cannon there is a small white cloud wherever one is fired, and a spurt of red sand where their shells dig into the veldt. The smoke of war, therefore, and the so-called roar of battle are now-a-days occasional, scattered, inconsiderable.

Rifle-firing has been the principal feature of our fights. It sounds like the frying of fat, or like the crackling and snapping of green wood in a bonfire. If you are within two miles of the front you are apt to be under fire, and then you hear the music of individual bullets. Their song is like the magnified note of a mosquito. "Z—z—z—z—z" they go over your head; "z—z—z—z—p" they finish as they bury themselves in the ground. This is a sound only to be heard when the bullets fly very close. You pick up your heels and run a hundred, or even fifty, yards, and you hear nothing but the general crackle of rifle-fire in and before the trenches.

The "putt-putt," or Vickers-Nordenfeldt gun, is able to interest you at a distance of three miles. Its explosions are best described by the nickname given to the gun by one regiment: "the blooming door-knocker." Its bullets or shells are as big as the bowl of a large briar-root pipe, and they tear and slit the air with a terrible sound, exploding

when they strike. The firing of this gun was heard all over the largest of our battlefields, and the sound of exploding shells carried far, because they were apt to fall on the quiet, outer edge of the field. The whizz that even these missiles make in flying, however, is, like the whispered answers of a maid in love, only to be heard by the favoured individual who is especially addressed.

Thus the many separate sounds are not loud enough to blend. The crowning, all-pervading noises are those of the guns and of the rifle-fire, and on the vast veldt, spread over a double line of five to seven miles in length, only those that are very near are very loud.

The scene of battle—the general view—is exceedingly orderly. There may be a desperate scrimmage where a company or two are storming a kopje, but level your glass on yonder hill, and what do you see—a fringe of tiny jets of fire from the top where the Boers are, and our men in khaki rising, and reclining, and occasionally firing, as they win their way upward.

The general view displays an arrangement as methodical as a chess-board. There are several battalions flat on their faces in two or three long

lines. Over here is a battery in perfect order, with its limber of horses at rest near by. Another battery, equally well arranged, as if to have its photograph taken, is to be seen in the middle field ; a third is on the farther side. The cavalry is sweeping across the veldt in perfect rank and alignment. There is no confusion anywhere—nothing is helter-skelter or slap-dash.

I remember only two momentary disturbances of this stern, steady discipline. One was in the afternoon, during the Modder River fight, when a large band of mounted Boers made a flank movement on our extreme right, and fired a volley at our immense mass of transport and ambulance waggons, water-carts, and ammunition trains.

The drivers were taken by surprise, and fell to lashing their mule teams and horses, generally to the accompaniment of high-keyed Kaffir yells. The rout lasted but five minutes or less, and was comical beyond description, because the leading mules climbed over the wheelers, and the faster the bullets fell the louder the Kaffirs yelled, and the more they plied their enormous whips.

The bravery of our stretcher-bearers is as much beyond question as it is beyond praise. All historians who tell of the dash and valour of the

generals, colonels, majors, captains, and "Tommies" of the army, in common justice must also describe how the chaplains, doctors, and stretcher-bearers went in and out of the most hellish fire, not once or twice, but all through every battle.

It is just outside the range of fire that you see and realise the horrors of war. It is there that the wounded crawl and stagger by you; it is there that they spend their final output of energy, and fall down to lie until assistance comes; it is there that you see stretchers laden with their mangled freight, and sound soldiers bearing the wounded on their backs and in their arms.

More certainly to know the brutality and woe of war, happen upon a kopje that has just been stormed, or a trench that has been carried. Go to such a place to-day, twenty centuries after Christ came with His message of peace on earth, and good-will to men, and behold what you shall see.

"Here," said I to a photographer in such a place—I think it was Belmont—"snap this scene. Look at the wounded all over the ground. Quick! out with your camera."

"Oh, I can't," said he; "it's too horrible!"

"As you please," I said, "but it's what the public wants."

You read, in the writings of those who know nothing of war, about the writhing of the wounded, and the groaning on the battlefield. There is no writhing, and the groans are few and faint. There was one man who was simply cut to pieces by a shell at Maaghersfontein, and his sufferings must have been awful. He kept crying, "Doctor, can't you do anything?" Another begged to be killed, and the first wounded man I saw kept saying, poor fellow, in ever so low a voice, "Oh, dear, dear, dear! Oh, dear, dear, dear!" But there is much less groaning than you would imagine—very little in proportion to the sufferings.

Two things are so common with the wounded as to be almost like rules of behaviour. They all beg for water (it used to be cigarettes that they asked for on the Turkish side in the last war in Europe), and they seem always to be made gentle by their wounds. Men of the roughest speech, profane by second nature, cease to offend when stricken down.

"Well, mate," said one, whose leg was shattered, "you never know when your turn will come, do you?"

And another simply cried, "Oh, dear!"

Now and then you heard, "For God's sake get me taken to an ambulance," but no profanity was intended there.

Many may wonder how it feels to be wounded. All who had bones shattered by expanding bullets used nearly the same language to describe the sensation.

"You feel," they said, "exactly as if you had received a powerful shock from an electric battery, and then comes a blow as if your foot" (or arm, or whatever part it might be) "was crushed by a stroke with a tremendous mallet." It is much the same in a lesser degree if a bone is struck by a Mauser bullet; but if the smooth, slender, clean little shot merely pierces the flesh, a burning or stinging sensation is the instantaneous result.

"Lying six hours in the broiling sun was pretty bad," said one whose arm-bone was smashed; "but the really awful experience was the jolting over rocks when I was carried off in an ambulance."

Another man, an officer, whose foot was smashed by an explosive bullet, said, "Look at my pipe. That's what I did to keep from saying anything." He had bitten off an inch of the hardened rubber mouthpiece. That was before his wound was

dressed. The relief that is given by the dressing of a wound must be exquisite, for you hear next to no groans or moans after a doctor has given this first attention.

In the army of Lord Methuen the great majority of wounds were in the arms and feet; but other points and experiences in war are more remarkable. The chances of receiving a wound seem not to have greatly increased with the improvements in modern death-dealing implements. There were more than a million shots fired at Modder River, and yet only about eight hundred men were hit, while the number of bullets that hit water-bottles, haversacks, ration-tins, and coat-sleeves was astonishing. The damage to life and limb by the excessive artillery fire was next to nothing.

On a typical field of battle the armies oppose one another with orderly masses. Staff officers ride hither and thither. Batteries rumble to and fro at long intervals as they are ordered to take new positions, and in the same way the cavalry appear and reappear on the edges of the field. Stretcher-bearers bring the wounded out of the zone of danger, and ambulances roll up, get their loads, and roll away again, all day continually, as in a ceaseless train.

Brave privates bring out the wounded, and work their way back into fire again, now running forward, now dropping flat upon the veldt. Skulkers work back to the edge of the field in the same way—a few only—and are gathered up and sent forward in batches by the officers who come upon them. At last the cheer of British victory is heard, and the whole force rushes forward; or darkness falls upon an unfinished fight, and we grope about the veldt seeking our camps, and the food and drink that most of us have gone without too long.

CHAPTER XXV

A HALT IN MODERN WAR METHODS

ON January 20th Lord Methuen's force was not resting, but busy enough, though not fighting.

When we all come to be judged for the work we have done in these early days of the war, it shall not be said that in the time we took to fight four battles, and in the severity of those engagements, we did not do as much as could be expected of everyday fighting men.

A fickle public may have turned aside from us, fastening its passing interest on a Buller or a French, and saying, "it is to these new favourites that we must look for our excitement." But when we were filling the stage, what a brilliant spectacle we made! What dash we showed! What swiftness marked our progress! What

sturdy blows we dealt, and how quickly we showered them down!

We were not checked. It was the methods of modern warfare that halted.

It had not fallen to any other general's lot to meet with a foe so situated as to embody the entire strength, under fullest conditions, of the newest methods of defence.

It was easy enough for the world to cry "Halt!" in its interest in us, just as the Boers cried "Halt!" in our progress when we reached Maaghersfontein, but the Boer command to us to halt must also be considered by military scientists everywhere as an order given to all armed nations to stop and unlearn much that they have known of war—for Maaghersfontein seems likely to be the end of the fighting system that was practised by the Wellingtons, Wolseleys, Von Moltkes, and Grants of bygone days.

Look at Maaghersfontein. It is a grass and bush-strewn plain, not perfectly level, but indented by a few slight ridges. Had Lord Methuen advanced upon it as quickly from the Modder River fight as he rushed from one to the other of his preceding battles, he might not have been checked, because the strength of their defence

was wrought in the time he gave the Boers in which to build fresh trenches, and to recover from their rout.

He might thus have gained another victory, but this would only have postponed that revelation of the strength of modern weapons, which must, in any event, have soon startled the world. He had fought three battles in a week. He might have fought a fourth. Then his men must have rested, and he would have met his check at Spytfontein.

Somewhere, very soon, the Boers would have shown him what they demonstrated at Maaghersfontein, proving that, given a plain field of grass, modern magazine rifles, and quick-firing small guns, the whole German army itself could not dislodge the sixty-five thousand men of the two Boer republics.

It was not that there were many Boers or many British in this battle. Of the Boers there were twelve to fifteen thousand ; of the British eight or nine thousand at a full estimate. But it is certain that by a frontal attack on those grass-edged trenches not fifty thousand British could have beaten the fifteen thousand Boers, except at such a sacrifice of life as no commander would require, or could be pardoned for occasioning.

The question of the wisdom or unwisdom of pursuing the method of frontal attack, which had served Lord Methuen with success up to this point, is not a matter to be discussed in these descriptive pages.

For frontal attack the old military manuals declared that the attacking force must outnumber the defenders by three to one. To-day, with the new weapons, it is said that ten men must attack one, but it is impossible to set the modern proportion correctly, since, to all intents and purposes, Maaghersfontein battlefield, with its threefold trenches extending twenty-five miles, was as impregnable to infantry as Cronstadt is to attack by torpedo boats.

It has been beyond question proved that many changes must be made in coming warfare to suit the new conditions by which we are confronted. Even as the Boers have shown that they have been learning how best to utilise their advantages, since the war began, so we are gaining knowledge, and certainly have yet a great deal to acquire.

The Boer as a stalker of game, and later, as a warrior, had made the fullest use of the natural advantages of a country whose defences are everywhere abundant. Of these he took the kopjes

and their rocks to be the best, but at Belmont and Graspan he discovered that the reckless, seemingly blind, valour of our men made light of these, simply by making light of death.

The Boer, therefore, modified his methods, and adopted the shelter of entrenchments.

At Modder River he built his trenches at the edge of a steep river-bed, which afforded him cover for the movement of reinforcements, and the supplying of ammunition, food, and water to his forces. At Maaghersfontein he built a three-fold series of trenches, and made the centre of his position a kopje whose foot was fringed by vaal bushes, behind which he could move his reinforcements, carry off his dead and wounded, and distribute his food, and fresh supplies of cartridges.

With the old-style single-shot rifle the change from behind the rocks of his hills to the protection afforded by mere ridges, or hastily built trenches, would have made him an easy prey to the bravest troops in Europe, such as we believe to have been in Lord Methuen's following.

But with magazine rifles, artillery, and such fearful, terrifying weapons as the new Vickers-Nordenfeldt gun, he could make a ridge or trench impregnable.

One of the most interesting and formidable of the new conditions of war which we have experienced is that we so seldom see our foe. Can the keenest student of war comprehend what it means to go on week after week, and month after month, fighting an invisible enemy?

A few Boers were to be seen bolting before us at Belmont, a smaller number escaping from the punishment we were meting out to them at Graspan, and several hundred showing themselves —with uncommon impudence and courage—before the beginning of the battle at Modder River; but there were at this time men in our army who had never seen a Boer in battle; there were even officers who had only seen one or two in one battle, and five or six in another. In engagement after engagement our men have thrown themselves upon the veldt, moved to do so by a hail of bullets around them, and then have fired away for hours at a time, aiming at the noise or the flame of the enemy's fire in trenches which they could not see.

This is true to such an extent, that at Modder River there were whole battalions of ours that did not know at the end of the day whether the

enemy was north or south of the river; in fact, they believed, during the entire battle, that the enemy was on the farther side of it. Under such circumstances, if we did not pick up some wounded and take some prisoners, as actual ocular proof of the existence of a flesh-and-blood enemy, we might almost have expected the more imaginative of our soldiers to believe that they had been fighting a phantom host.

They had seen the earth crack apart, and vomit flame and bullets; they had heard the hell's chorus of battle; they had seen their comrades fall dead and mangled by their sides; but they had not seen the men who produced the tumult and the damage. This, then, is among the new conditions of war which have to be taken into account.

With the introduction of smokeless powder a foe entrenched, or hiding behind rocks, is a foe invisible; and it takes a tenfold stouter heart to fight an unseen enemy, than to join issue with a substantial line of flesh-and-blood, or to reply to a leaping, running target of brown smoke which locates, if it does not reveal, the danger with which men have to deal.

In a way, then, and to a certain degree—if we

may say so of such an experienced soldier—Lord Methuen had to grope his way through, against, and around these new conditions, and, in common with our other generals, to face new problems and fresh devices that have sprung from the first rivalry of men equally well armed with the latest implements of war.

It is easier to sit at home and denounce our tactics, than to understand the new light thrown upon warfare by the adoption of smokeless powder, and the terrible, staggering surprises brought about by weapons that can kill at a farther range than two miles, and can stop ten men with one magazine full of shot.

We of the British side have placed great reliance upon our artillery, and especially upon that branch of it which wields the deadly gas and murderous shock of lyddite. It may be that our successes thus far have been due to the fact that ours are the best artillerists in the world, and that we have had the use of lyddite to ourselves; but we shall only know all the truth when the war ends, or when we come with a rush upon some battlefield which we have pelted with shells for hours.

In South Africa the local reporters have told us

repeatedly of the fearful slaughter our shells have caused, of how our gunners "saw 400 Boers, fired, and then saw not a soul"; but we must take these reports with more than a grain of salt. We have been under artillery fire — sometimes for hours—and it has been well-directed fire. It has done us but little damage, and therefore we may naturally ask why that which we have shot at the enemy should be thought to have done so very much more execution?

While admitting the familiar truth that artillery fire is terrifying, those who have themselves outlived the terror may well wonder whether this may not also be true of the Boers, and, wondering, wait for revelation of the facts.

We do know that a European army, fighting under European rules, is a clumsy weapon against the Boer, who opposes us with weapons which render one man as good as ten, and all ten invisible. We remember the old saying, that "an army moves upon its belly," and we paraphrase this and make it read "the modern army must fight upon its belly."

We have learned that even British valour, displayed by a number of men equal to the foe, is of no conclusive value under the new conditions,

and that if all modern armies could entrench themselves, and could then compel their enemies to meet them in frontal attack, war would soon be abandoned as impossible.

CHAPTER XXVI

CORRESPONDENTS UNDER FIRE

HE had reported only one battle before this, and he had gone into it gaily, with a journalist's longing for a new sensation; but something now happened that was not in his programme.

While running down the railway embankment he had all but stumbled over a dead man with one shoulder and breast torn away.

Fascinated, he turned to look, and saw that it was the body of a splendid fellow who had sat next to him at mess the night before—an officer of the Grenadier Guards. The unclosed eyes were looking at him. They seemed to follow him as he turned away, sick at stomach and at heart.

Sick at stomach and at heart, he stumbled ahead over the rocks and furrows of the veldt,

tugging at the reins of his horse, which persisted in trying to graze, as horses always do, even where bullets are whistling and shells are bursting—as horses will do even while their riders are swaying in the saddle, shot through heart or head. He cursed the glutton for its lack of sentiment, and when its nose went down again for another nibble in the sage bush, he lashed its face with the loose end of the lines.

After that there was another war on the veldt—a tussle with his horse—a war within a war.

He was trying to hurry to a small, round, rocky kopje, against which he had seen a regiment in khaki fling itself English fashion, headlong, blunt, straight from the shoulder.

His horse was still trying to graze, and must be either ridden or turned loose. As this was at too close quarters for him to make himself a target on horseback, he let it go, and ran for the men in khaki, and the crackle of their rifle-fire, which was answered and echoed by the continuous fire of the grimy and unkempt Boers from behind the towering rocks, and when he reached the last line of British, stooping like stalkers after deer, he found himself in a downpour of shot.

The bullets sang all around him, like darting, angry bees disturbed.

They sang over his head, they whizzed over his shoulders beside both ears, they zizzed by his waist, and they buzzed between his legs; for there is no place where the superfluous bullets do not go; and thank God! nine hundred and ninety-nine in every thousand are superfluous.

Yes, they even buzzed between his legs, and he fell flat on his face, and said to himself that he did not get salary enough for such an experience, and that the war correspondent who exposed himself to fire was recreant to his duty, and an idiot to boot. He lay flat on his face, and lo! the firing ceased. There was only now and then a shot, and here and there a reply, and he looked up and saw the men in khaki, silhouetted against the shiny black rocks, all boldly upright, and rushing up the hill. They had driven the unwashed, unshaven enemy out of those rocky nests, and the day was won. The day was won, and all was well, except that he, a war correspondent, had run needless risks.

And now another day had come, and another battle was on. Another battle was on, and to be in it and safe at the same time he was with the

battery of naval guns. Though it is not at all true, any one who has never been through a war will tell you that you are safe in battle if you are with the guns. He was a handsome young fellow, and has since proved himself brave to the marrow; but with bravery he unites common-sense, and he said to himself: "I can't write if I'm killed or wounded. I'm paid for keeping safe." So he and another correspondent were with the naval men in their broad-rimmed straw hats covered with khaki, with their loose, slouching attitudes and movements—so different from the trim and style of soldiers, without being any the worse for the difference.

When the gunners saw anything at which to fire they were busy for a minute or two, but between whiles they lounged about as though at a picnic. The officers smoked cigarettes and talked of last night's "sing-song," humming over again some of the "catching" choruses they had heard. The men squatted on the veldt with their backs against their gun carriages, as sturdy chickens nuzzle up against a mother hen. They fired when they saw some Boers a-horseback, or heard a long fusillade from an unseen trench. Nobody answered them. It was one-sided warfare such

as an onlooker, paid for keeping safe, could enjoy.

It was one-sided warfare, till the Boers got one of their batteries into position behind a ridge a mile and a half away. Then it became two-sided, like a game of battledore and shuttle-cock, in which it seemed that every time we sent them a shell they sent it back. A Royal Artillery battery rumbled up and unlimbered near us, sending its horses a little to the rear, and instantly opening heavy fire on the foe.

Opening heavy fire—and meeting heavy fire. Z-z-z-o-oo-woof! came the shells, ripping the air, gashing the ground, and throwing up fountains of red earth and broken iron. The correspondents, and one or two officers who appeared to have no part in the work of the battery, stood near a railway culvert of solid masonry, and strolled into its shelter every time they saw the flash and smoke of a Boer gun. It may not have been very brave, but they had no call to be brave just then.

"Courage is not a thing to brandish about like a horse pistol in the hands of a madman," the correspondent thought, "it's like good liquor, to be barrelled, and tapped when called for."

They continued to stroll into the culvert at every flash of a Boer gun, until they saw that the Boers shot wide, all of them, and every time. Then they turned their backs upon the culvert, and strolled about, pooh-poohing the enemy's shells.

"Hello! there goes that gun. That's going wide of the R.A. limber. Hi! there goes the chap who is shooting at us. Let's see if he gets any nearer than the next county. Look! there goes the Johnny who's after that bunch of transport waggons. By Jove! see how they scamper! Hanged if he didn't chuck dust all over that near buck-waggon!"

In this way the idlers chronicled every shot that was addressed to us by the enemy, until—until z-z-z-oo-wuf went a shell into the R.A. limber, and two horses fell, one minus a jaw, and the other with its stomach torn out. Somebody began the remark "that Johnny has got the range," when, z-z-z-oo-woof came a shell straight under the first of the naval guns. Every man round it stood his ground, and death licked his lean chops as he reached a bony arm towards them, but—the shell did not explode. Then number one gun was quickly hauled back a hundred yards, and while

it was moving a shell chased it, and exploded within thirty yards.

"I get no pay for this," said the handsomer and younger of the correspondents. "Let us go over and see what that heavy rifle-firing is about on the far right."

"I'm rather taken with this," said his eager companion. "It's getting very lively. I'd like to see it out."

But the first one would not stay, and as he carried lunch for both of them in his saddlebags, they went together and sat down out of gun range, to dine upon sardines, biscuits, water and cheese. Like the soft strains of an orchestra, the first correspondent sang his refrain about breach of faith to public and employer, which is perpetrated by a war correspondent who puts himself in the way of danger.

An hour later each sat upon his separate ant-hill on the extreme right of the battlefield, where an endless awful volleying of rifle fire had sounded ever since daybreak—hour upon hour.

There then they sat, two thousand five hundred yards behind the firing-line of the British, who lay in rows upon their bellies firing at unseen Boers in an invisible trench, which spat out bullets as a

needle-bath sprays water. The dead brown veldt lay empty between the two reporters and the battle —empty save that it was sparsely tufted with dried sage bush, and studded at intervals with hard, conical ant-heaps, one, two, or three feet high, and all wide enough for shelter. Empty, except for these, and the mangled men who were crawling and hobbling out of the fight; and the stretcher-bearers, who were either rushing in to pick them up, or else seeking covert.

I fancy the younger correspondent was congratulating himself upon his safety, but as he did so there came a sound like heavy hail upon a tin roof, and bullets whistled, pinged, and spatted all round him. The sound came from behind his back, for the Boers had made a flank movement, dashing furiously toward the ambulance and transport waggons, banging at them with a volley, and setting all the drivers and horses in a panic. It was then that these two inadvertently ran straight into the danger zone of the main battle.

If there is a place in action which is more dangerous than even the firing line, certainly it is the zone where the bullets strike the earth. Soldiers almost always shoot too high—over the heads of the foe before them, so that it is safer to

be in the front than in the middle rear. To the middle rear ran these adventurers, and then fell down. They fell when they found the air as thick with bullets as ever a pudding was with plums—and when they saw that every movement was followed by a spurt of sand from falling shot. Have you ever seen a sorry tramp walking in the rain with water gushing from the holes in his boots? The sand fountains reminded them of that. Both fell behind an ant-heap, and began to laugh.

"There was no other way to run," they said to one another, "it looked as if the Boers would cut us off in any other direction."

"Putt-putt-putt-putt," sounded the awful machine-gun from the heights, and its tornado of one-pound shells raked the air over their heads with seven screaming missiles at a time. Zizz-zit hummed the Mauser, and the Martini-Henry bullets, like magnified bees in swarms. The air was thick with flying lead. Bits of the friendly ant-hill were chipped off. Spray from the dust-jets thrown up by bullets fell softly on their hands as they lay motionless. Thicker and thicker came the hail, for the Boer sharpshooters had seen the two men run and drop, and were sending

bullets to search the spot. They buried their noses in the red sand, and talked and thought.

"Say something funny," said the younger man. "I wish young B—— was here. He'd keep us laughing. Wow! but that was close. It fanned my ear."

"I wonder what's become of our horses."

"Hang the horses! What I wonder is, how that silly mule can stand there a hundred yards ahead of us, where the bullets are like drops in a slanting rain. I'll bet the brute is full of holes and doesn't know it. Perhaps we are, too."

"Hello! here's that Guards doctor. Doctor! Doctor! come and tell us what's going on." The Guards doctor is nothing loth. He dashes over to the correspondents, and in doing so awakens a new fury of rifle and machine-gun fire.

"I can't stay long," he says; "we've a great many wounded up there, and I must look after them. How's the fight going? It's simply going on for ever, and neither side is budging. You think the bullets are thick here. Watch me go forward, and when you see me drop, you may know it's a bit thick. There's one place ahead where the shot come in solid streaks like

telegraph wires. Well, ta-ta! I must make a dash for it."

As he runs they watch, and see the tiny sand fountains spurt up before, beside, and behind him. At last he drops, and for half an hour lies quite still.

For an hour and a half they keep their faces close to the veldt behind their ant-hill. Every now and again there comes a lull, and they think they will make a bolt for safety, and one raises his head or lifts an arm, whereupon the bullet factory opens again for business, and leaden streaks rake the air like a fine-toothed comb. They resign themselves, and watch other men in similar straits.

They see a Coldstream Tommy run to a tiny sage bush that wouldn't stop a pea-shooter, and gratefully take its shelter.

They see another lying flat as a flap-jack, and reaching stealthily, blindly, over the rough ground to gather little stones—none bigger than a hen's egg. He gets five or six of these and builds a whimsical shelter four inches wide and three inches high. He presses his face in the sand with this ridiculous toy wall in front of his crown. It is the best that he can do, and he

is content. He is content until—ten minutes later an explosive bullet hits his foot, and smashes it as if a heavy sledge-hammer had crushed it.

He calls to the correspondents to bring the stretcher-bearers to him. Two of these have been hiding behind an ant-hill for a very long while. To them the correspondents yell, but the bearers are unable to hear. A Tommy looms up ahead dragging a shattered leg, hopping along before a pursuing blizzard of bullets. He, too, calls to the correspondents, "for Heaven's sake, gentlemen, get me to an ambulance. I've been wounded like this for ten hours." At once they forget themselves and their danger, and, telling him with the shattered leg to go and lie by him with the crushed foot, they start through the rain of bullets to try to rouse the two bearers.

They forget themselves and their danger, though there is death at every step—just as every man who is any good forgets self and danger on the battlefield if only he has something definite to do.

Even if he has the jumps, give him a rifle and see how interested he will become. Send him galloping into the fire on an errand, and his funk

will drop from him, as if the bullets had shot it away.

A word of command to those stretcher-bearers brought them quickly to their feet. Then the correspondents had nothing to do, and then again the bullets pinged beside them, and buzzed about them, and they dropped flat on the veldt—with no shelter this time. There they lay a long time. A bullet touched the hair of one; another flew between their heads, which were not eighteen inches apart. Three Tommies in full flight saw them, and ran towards them, bringing a cloud of shot along.

"Keep away! keep away! you fools!" the correspondents shouted. "Get yourselves killed as much as you like, but don't draw the fire on us. Lie down by yourselves, you idiots." This sudden outburst of abuse revealed how great had been the tension on their nerves.

"It's telling on me," said the young and handsome one, "yet I am not conscious of being afraid."

"There's no room for fear," said the other. "We know our danger. We can't help ourselves, and that's all there is about it. I'm sick of my lime-juice and water. Give me a drink of your plain essence of microbes."

Next a bullet-headed Tommy darted up from behind, and dropped beside the younger correspondent. Just Heaven! how he was sworn at and abused, as a new hail of bullets showered around the three, attracted by his dash across the veldt.

"If you would pull in that blooming tin pail, and put it under your tummy, you wouldn't git so much o' the blooming bullets. It shoines loike a heliograph." He was right. He referred to a two-quart, bright, new tin water-bottle, which the elder man had left beside him on the ground.

Of all the sublimated fools in any army, this Tommy was the worst. He next asked for a drink, and, taking a covered bottle, raised himself on his elbows, put up his head, lifted the bottle high, and began to quaff. A thousand rifle balls and ten minutes' play of the "putt-putt" showed that this had been accepted as a challenge. Again Tommy was sworn at for an idiot—and what was his reply?

"I know it. When I was loying hover there be'ind a hant-'ill, I 'eld up me blooming 'elmet, an' got a 'ole put through it before I could get it down again."

He was quieted by the impressive assurance that

he would get a pistol ball through his skull at the next provocation, and for another half-hour he lay still. Then suddenly he said—

"Gents, I'm blimed tired of planting me nose in the sand, and waiting for it to sprout. What I say is, let's run for it, each one in a different direckshin, so the blooming Boers won't know which to peg at."

"You're a general, Tommy," said the correspondents; "we're with you."

He gave the word. All three ran like mad in different ways, and the Boers directed their fire on the young and handsome correspondent. It was dusk, and jets of flame sprang out of the veldt all round him. But he was not hit.

CHAPTER XXVII

AN OPEN LETTER TO A FIELD-CORNET

To Hermanus Swigelaar, Esq., Boer Farmer, Field-Cornet, of Ramdam, Orange Free State.

MODDER RIVER, *Feb. 6th.*

DEAR SIR,—You know how a man will sometimes leave a little thing behind him when he says goodbye—his goloshes, or umbrella, or gloves.

Well, when I called on you in my Cape cart with a bit of the British army, and you chanced not to be at home, I came away without my cart.

You may have been surprised, but I've seen men and women do more than that. I was walking about Havana once when everybody of both sexes left everything they had, and came out of the houses in just their complexions—but that was because an earthquake occurred at precisely eleven in the morning, when they were all in their baths.

The cart I overlooked is what is called a "cooper cart," and there is not a better in the country, so that it is absurd for you to think I left it as a present to a total stranger, or because I did not want it.

I asked your neighbour across the border, Colonel Macbean, of the Gordon Highlanders, to fetch it away with him, whenever he went to pay his courtesy call in return for our entertainment during the four-and-twenty hours we spent on your farm, when you were not at home. He now writes me that you have taken my cart to Jacobsdal, and that I must address all further correspondence on the subject to you. Colonel Macbean doubtless thinks himself a humourist, but you observe that I am taking his advice seriously.

I want my cart or fifty pounds—in sovereigns, not Krugers.

I had just as lief you should keep the cart, because it would serve as proof that I have been in your country, and know what I am writing about; therefore please bring the money to me in Lord Methuen's camp. We shall all be glad to see you, and may probably press you to stay with us —till the war is over.

I was much interested in your district. It is the

first corner of the enemy's country that I have visited, except Cape Colony. I like the Free State —a little. It is the worst place but one this side of the Sudan, the very worst being the region where Lord Methuen has been fighting. There was a suggestion of green herbage and foliage in your desert, and I was grateful for that.

What a queer people you are to call yourselves farmers when you are in reality a mere lot of cow-boys !

Take your own "farm," for example, which appears to be the entire valley that surrounds you. A couple of miles from your house is a barbed wire enclosure given up to corn, figs, mulberries, and peaches—a place the size of an ordinary vegetable garden in Finchley or Upper Norwood. Such a patch constitutes a man a farmer, it appears, though the rest of your valley is precisely as God made it, and your real business, like that of the Afridis, Turks, Servians, Albanians, and all other such folk, is cattle herding.

The more I saw of Boer homes and surroundings the less I liked your people. I hope you don't mind my saying so.

The little group of poplars in front of your house made the place very inviting from a distance,

but when we reached your home, which is typical of all the others, what did we see? A garden, or a lawn, or flowers? On the contrary, for a wide space all round your houses the veldt looks like a shooting-ground. Bones, discarded tins, bottles, skulls of cattle, putrefying bodies of fowls and meer-cats, with rubbish of every sort, were lying about.

Such are the surroundings of the homes of yourself and your wealthiest neighbours.

And close beside, almost against your houses, you build your kraals—compounds walled in with rocks, where you keep your cattle, just where an Englishman—or, for that matter, a Hollander—would cultivate a beautiful and glorious flower garden.

Then, again, your houses are extremely primitive and rude. There must be some essential lacking, my dear Swigelaar, in a people who live close to the English, and yet do not even learn how to consult their own comfort and convenience. There is a little scroll saw-work on one corner of your house. It makes the building look absurdly lop-sided, but it is the only superfluity—except a cat-o'-nine-tails for licking the black farm hands—that I saw during two days in your neighbourhood.

Your houses are nothing but boxes with holes in them for doors and windows—and, actually, in your house, one or two rooms had no windows at all! Your glossy-green floors are of pressed mud varnished with diluted cow-dung and blood.

Believe me, these things help to show why your Republics are offered up for sacrifice; they wallow in the past, with no hold on the future.

I sat on your stoop, Swigelaar, with a pro-British Afrikander, who endeavoured to explain things in a way calculated to make me more lenient in my judgment.

He said that only twenty-five years ago countless herds of deer of different sorts roamed over your alleged farm. You could not keep cattle, and if you cultivated any edible crop these blesbok, springbok, and steinbok would devour it.

But you had no desire to grow anything, or keep any animal except a horse. Your people were hunters, like their fathers, and you were so busy killing and eating antelope, and selling the skins, that in 1872 one of five traders in a near-by village sent to England 80,000 hides. The other four did quite as well, I believe.

You only took up farming twenty years ago, and then you went in for cattle, and had to keep

them close to your house on account of stray and hungry lions, and abundant wolves. That's all very well, Swigelaar, but you need not go on for ever farming with your little finger. It is time you took two hands to it now. And you do not fear any lion (except the British Lion) in these days, therefore you can move your kraals and cattle away from your bedroom and sitting-room windows—unless you like the aroma.

As I sat on your stoop I let my mind turn over many of the interesting things I have heard about what goes on in such houses as yours, all over the two Republics.

I seemed to see the very occasional visitors ride or drive up, each one saluting you as "neef" (cousin) if you were about his age, or "oom" (uncle) if you were older.

If your visitor lived in the State, you were certain to know him; if he was a stranger, you would remember for twenty years what day he came, and what he said and did.

You entertained your visitors on your long, broad stoop of rough and irregular stones, in the shadow of the mulberry tree, which has pushed its way up through them. If he carried any spirits you would drink with him, but you never

produced for a guest any of the little gin you were apt to have indoors for your own and your family's use. To all you offered coffee, and, now and then, doughnuts made at the moment.

Often these visitors were pedlars or traders, usually Hebrews. How frequently they tricked your neighbours, and sharpened the already fine cunning of your people!

You occasionally had to sign your name to necessary papers. What an event that was!

"Hush!" cried your wife, Petronella; "father is going to sign his name."

All was still as death, and the household stood a-tiptoe, and craned its neck to see you painting your autograph, while your mouth worked in concert with your pen.

If you sold Ahasuerus some skins for thirty pounds, he offered you ten shillings to sign a receipt for forty, did he not? You did not hesitate, but grinned at getting ten shillings so easily. He wrote out the paper, you signed it, and your wife rolled her eyes at you and said, "Oh, Hermanus, how dreadful clever you are!"

Six months later, you probably found that it was a promissory note you had signed—but let us not dwell upon the subject, Hermanus.

Those whom you put up in your house saw your singular dining customs. You men always eat first, while your wife cooks in the kitchen, and your daughter—for whom you bought that amazing German melodeon that's in the sitzkammer (sitting-room)—moves about the table waving the flies away with a cloth, and wiping indiscriminately with it the plates or the baby's face.

"Have you finished?" you inquire in due course, "then sit back."

Now the women come in and eat their dinner from the men's unwashed plates. Very nice girls —who are young enough to bother about trifles— will scrape the *débris* of the man's meal to one side of the plate. Those who are absurdly squeamish, and want to put on side, will turn the dirty plate over, and eat off the bottom.

The ornaments in a house reveal the taste of the family, and suggest its degree or quality of polish, which is civilisation.

I look, therefore, at your ornaments with interest, Hermanus. On the walls are the patent-medicine almanacs given away at the store, and some chromo-lithograph pictures, given as advertisements.

But the real proof of taste in every burgher's

house is the wife's table in the sitting-room—you'll bear me out in that, Hermanus, won't you? This table carries some yellow, blue, and green sugar and butter dishes, such as are given away with tea in the Old Kent Road. Perhaps there is also a tin dish, or little tray, washed over with brass. Whoever has such a table need hang his head before no burgher in the land.

It is a Sunday evening and all are out in the stoop, when up rides a young man.

From afar the sight of him makes you all smile —all except Miss Aletta, whose cheeks turn scarlet, as she rises and flees into the house.

It's "Coos" (Jacobus) Vanderbile, and he has come a-courting, as every one may see by the blue puggaree wound around his hat, and the splendid saddle-cloth beneath him—an extra long cloth bordered with embroidered roses.

That hat-band and saddle-cloth form the livery of Cupid in your country, eh, Hermanus?

Coos off-saddles, and salutes the family, taking you aside to ask if he may court Aletta.

When sundown comes, and you and Petronella take to your bed as usual, Aletta and Coos sit up together in the sitzkammer, with only a curtain across the doorway between you and them.

Maidenly modesty has led her to produce a very short bit of candle, which she lights and puts on the table, knowing that Coos must go to bed when it is burned out. He is not to go home, for no Boer travels at night.

Coos sees the candle, and slily whips out a bit of his own three times as long, which he lights, and sets up, slipping Aletta's tiny piece into his pocket. Then he draws his chair up quite close, and sits with his shoulder against hers.

They both giggle. Coos has a quarter of a pound of motto lozenges in one pocket, and a bottle of scent in another.

He finds a lozenge marked "I love you," and puts it in Aletta's lap.

Again she giggles. So does he. Then he gives her a handful of lozenges, to find one with an answer to his declaration. Talking in sweets lasts an hour, and at the end he gives her the bottle of scent.

There is much more giggling, a little wrestling and horse-play, ending with a kiss, and the candle is at its last minute.

Aletta slips behind the curtain into the family sleeping-room, and Coos goes to bed on the settee with its seat of crossed leather thongs.

Very soon Petronella and Aletta will go to the store of Jacobsdal to buy the wedding outfit—a black gown, a print gown, cotton for a petticoat, a pair of stockings (to be worn only on the wedding day), and a new pair of boots.

Let us hope the wedding may not go amiss, like that of certain neighbours of yours, Hermanus. You remember when two couples stood up together to be wedded, and the clergyman married the men to the wrong girls.

They asked him to do it over again, and make it right, but he said he could not; he would have to carry the matter before the higher authorities of the church.

At this, you recollect, the young couples and all their relatives and friends said they could not wait, as the coffee and cakes would spoil.

But the clergyman was firm. He declared that by himself he could not undo the marriage, and at that the couples decided to stay as they were, rather than waste the coffee and cakes. So they have been wrongly but happily mated ever since.

After that do you still say yours are not a funny people, Hermanus?

As I sat on your stoop I thought of all this, and of much more. I cannot, for instance, bring

myself to like your sleeping in your clothes, or the way you treat the Kaffirs whom you virtually commandeer to work for you.

Your morning and evening prayers would be commendable were it not that, after they are finished, you are so apt to boast of how you have tricked some one in trade, or pilfered something at the store.

You are a born horseman, a born hunter, a good hater, a stubborn fighter as long as you can keep behind cover, but you are as simple as wax in the hands of your foxy politicians, who should have seen that the wicked game they put up is a game of "tails we lose, and heads the other fellows win!"

I am, my dear Hermanus, yours, &c.,

JULIAN RALPH.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE RELIEF OF KIMBERLEY

FIELD-MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS, with his distinguished Chief of Staff, Lord Kitchener, arrived at Capetown in January, and after supervising the preparation of a larger force than had, up to that time, been employed in the war, he went to the front. He visited De Aar, Orange River, and the practically united camp of twenty thousand men which extended from Orange River to Maaghersfontein, and was commanded partly by Major-General Wood, and, at Modder River, where the greater number were encamped, by General Lord Methuen.

Everywhere the soldiers responded to the presence of Lord Roberts as if it were electrical, and it was felt that a new and brighter turn in the course of the war had been reached.

At about the same time General French and the

greater part of the force with which he had been operating at Colesberg slipped away to join the Field-Marshal's army, without the Boers getting knowledge, I believe, of the nature of his movement.

General Sir Hector Macdonald, leading the now newly-invigorated Highland Brigade, marched twenty miles to the westward of Modder River Camp to divert the attention of the enemy from what was going on under General Roberts.

The Highlanders engaged the enemy at Koodoosberg with measurable success; that is to say, they put the Boers to flight, but, as had been the almost unbroken rule with our troops in this war, they failed to capture either their guns or any considerable number of prisoners. For this the cavalry under General Babbington had been called upon, but they did not reach the scene until the enemy had managed to escape.

Practically all the cavalry in the western border of the Free State were now included in General French's force. General Colville commanding the Guards was transferred to a new division formed on the spot. Brigadier-General Pole-Carew took over the Guards, and to Colonel Douglas, who had been on Methuen's staff, was given the

Ninth Brigade in place of Pole-Carew — the brigade which contained the "Fighting Fifth" (Northumberlands), and Colonel Barter's Yorkshire Light Infantry, troops which had borne most of the brunt of the fighting in three of Lord Methuen's four engagements. They and the valorous Guards Brigade were left with General Methuen to guard the line and watch Maaghersfontein.

Within a week after his arrival at the front Lord Roberts was moving into the Free State with forty-five thousand men. The chosen point of invasion was just below Graspan, by the passage between hills through which the Australians and New Zealanders had cleared the way for General Babbington's extra-cautious and generally unimportant manœuvre of the second week in January.

The sight of Lord Roberts' great army in motion was inspiriting and magnificent, but the conditions surrounding it were such as seemed to give the usually recumbent Boers great odds. It was the hottest time in the summer of that region. The heat, which became insufferable at five o'clock in the morning, reached broiling point by nine o'clock, and knew no abatement until the sun sank. The parched veldt, suffering from an

almost rainless summer, had turned its surface into powder, and the hot wind, playing with this, half smothered the troops in floury dust almost continuously during daylight each day, and once during an entire night.

French had gone ahead with his three divisions of cavalry to move with a rapidity which took no account of the heat, though the native horses of the Boers, after one-third as much work, rapidly succumbed to exhaustion, and delivered more than three score of the enemy's laden waggons into our hands.

But it must be remembered that General French's force was mounted. Fancy the strain which the heat, the dust, and the absence of water imposed upon the foot-soldiers under the Field-Marshal! In one day about sixty men fell out of the ranks, stricken down by the sun.

It was at daybreak of February 12th, that the bulk of General Roberts's army started for the Free State, arriving at Ramdam—an abandoned farmhouse long used as a laager—an hour before noon and resting there. General French and his three brigades of mounted men had made an earlier start. The enemy was caught napping, for the Boers in that part of the country were all

watching a body of mounted infantry that was marching up from Orange River to Jacobsdal.

On Monday, February 12th, General French, who had been following the Riet River on its southern side, crossed it at Waterfall Drift, when he had driven off some Boers with guns, who attempted to hold the fording place. The enemy retreated, and General French and his troops crossed, leaving his transport to follow.

The transport was viciously attacked, in its turn, but being well defended by the guarding force that accompanied it, also crossed the river after unimportant loses.

On the next day, General French reached and forded the Modder River at Klip Drift, where he came upon a large Boer camp, which he seized, with all its valuable equipment.

As the march continued the greatest pains were taken to suppress the predatory instincts of Tommy Atkins, who is but human after all, and to secure the goods of the Boers against plunder.

It is a diametrically different course to that which the Boers pursue upon British territory. It differs from the common custom of armies in the country of their foes; and it was certain to draw from the Boers contempt in place of grati-

tude; but so it was, and we kept order to such an extent that at one point our men asked leave of some women to gather fruit in a garden. The Boer men showed a refined and lofty appreciation of our sense of honour. They hid in the garden and shot down our men when they came there.

Having crossed the Modder, General French moved rapidly on toward Kimberley, which he reached and entered on Wednesday. At Alexandersfontein he scattered a detachment of the enemy, and seized a large laager, and store of supplies and ammunition.

When he reached Kimberley he had only lost one officer killed, and twenty, in all ranks, wounded—a small price to pay for so dramatic and skilful an expedition, and for restoring the high hopes and enthusiasm of every Britisher in South Africa. There was almost a delirium of rejoicing when the news reached the various colonies and their capitals.

In the meantime Jacobsdal was taken by Roberts's force. This little white and yellow village, with its German hospital and imposing Presbyterian church beside a tree-bordered single street with a ditch on one side, had been tempting Methuen's army for two months. It was the

headquarters of Cronje and the Boers who fought us at Modder River and Maaghersfontein, and it contained great stores of food and ammunition. We might have seized it on the day after the fight at Maaghersfontein—so a number of military experts have said—but we missed the chance.

While General French was in the neighbourhood of Jacobsdal the outposts were plagued, as by mosquitoes, by Boers from that village. A small force was sent to the place, but was met by rifle fire from the houses and garden-walls, and both Briton and Boer kept their positions till night, when the British left a guard and advanced with the army.

On the next day, the 15th of February, our artillery routed the enemy. They escaped from the village but were obliged to pass over a ridge in full view of our gunners, who riddled them with shrapnel. Thus we gained that point, and found, as we had supposed, that the stores had been removed to Boshof, and that the place was now merely used for the care of the Boer sick and wounded.

I was laid up with a troublesome bruise, and am only repeating the accounts I have received from others. They say that all the wretched,

semi-barbarous inhabitants of the place who appeared in the streets wore Red Cross badges on their arms. They seem never to tire, or to learn to feel the disgrace, of misusing that sacred emblem. They welcomed the British "not as enemies but as friends." They expressed surprise that their stores were not looted, they anathematised their President, who had betrayed them, they vowed that they were sick of the war.

Bah! how long are our leaders to be tricked by such duplicity and cunning? How sickening becomes their double-dealing when one learns the truth about their character! They are all things to all men. They shift their coats more quickly than any rapid-change-artist of the music-halls.

They are rampant, blatant English haters, thirsting for English blood, but the instant one is taken prisoner, or brought wounded to a British hospital, and finds himself among Englishmen, no one can vie with him in expressing admiration for the British, in condemning his own folly for having fought so noble a foe, and in so hopeless a cause. Gratitude he does not know or feign, and the kind treatment he gets he always looks upon as a proof of the weakness or the idiocy of his captors.

CHAPTER XXIX

RECORD OF THE SIEGE

THE siege of Kimberley lasted precisely four months and two days. The skilfully directed energy and pluck of its armed men under Colonel Kekewich, the great store of provisions that had been hoarded there principally by the De Beers Company, and the excellent natural fortifications made by the great mounds of earth thrown out of the diamond pits and enclosing three sides of the town, were its threefold safeguard and salvation.

Four days after war had been declared—that is to say, on October 14th—the military commandant, Lieut.-Colonel Kekewich, noticed suspicious activity on the part of the Boers, who had appeared in considerable numbers both to the north and the south of the town. At that time he was commanding about five hundred men—

the North Lancashire Regiment, the Diamond Fields Horse, and a considerable Town Guard.

Communication with Capetown by both wire and rail had been unmolested, and a special train had but just come in from the Cape with tons of food supplies. But on this day the wires southward had been cut, and the people learned that the Boers had also mutilated the railway line. All this happened near Spytfontein, where the army of the unfortunate Methuen two and a half months later advanced to battle and was repulsed at Maaghersfontein.

On October 15th, at dawn, the armoured train, commanded by Lieutenant Webster of the Lancashires, and supported by the Diamond Fields Horse, reconnoitred in the direction of Spytfontein, where the veldt is commanded by some formidable kopjes—the last ones on the road to the Diamond City from the south.

The armoured train was assaulted by artillery fire, but was not damaged, nor were any of the British killed or wounded; but their response with Maxim guns and rifles killed five Boers and wounded a large number.

An hour before noon on that morning the alarm was sounded by the De Beers whistles.

All the troops in town were gathered in camp, interest in the diamond mines became subordinated to the impulse for self-preservation, and the place become military first and all else after that.

Martial law was at once proclaimed. The thoroughness of the orders then issued showed that the leading spirits of the place had foreseen that the attractions of the diamond beds and the presence of Cecil Rhodes in Kimberley would render it a marked object for the covetous attack of the enemy. Indeed, when all the facts are made known, the forethought and liberality expended upon the provisioning of the place, especially if not solely by the De Beers Company, will strike the world as extraordinary.

The notice proclaiming martial law enjoined all citizens to refrain from having any dealings with the enemy, to remain indoors after 9 p.m. and before 6 a.m., or else provide themselves with special passes—unless they were members of the various military forces; to give immediate notice of the possession of any arms or ammunition, and so on.

Thus began the new order of things, and the siege of that feverish little capital whose entire existence had been flushed with excitement.

As was to have been expected, some of the merchants were more businesslike than compassionate, and set to work to squeeze inordinate profits out of the helplessness of their neighbours. They reckoned without thought of the baronial De Beers management and of Cecil Rhodes, alike too broad, too humane, and too sensible of the responsibility of their power to permit the fleecing of the many to gratify the cupidity of the few.

Therefore it was that, on October 20th, the following order by the Mayor, countersigned by Major W. A. T. O'Meara, was issued :—

" Large advances having taken place in local stores on some of the necessaries of life, and there being a likelihood of supplies running short if sold out in large quantities, the following prices have been fixed with the local tradesmen until further notice, and no goods are to be sold at higher prices than those mentioned hereunder : Fresh salmon, kippered herrings, &c., 1s. 3d. per tin ; sugar, all kinds, 4d. per lb. ; rice, 3d. per lb. ; condensed milk, 1s. per tin ; candles, 1s. per 16 oz. packet ; corned beef, 1 lb. tins, 1s. 3d. ; 2 lb. tins, 2s. ; bacon, 1s. 6d. per lb. ; Boer meal, sifted, 3d. per lb. ; Boer meal, unsifted, 2½d. ;

tea and coffee, no advance on original prices. All other necessaries to be sold at same prices as before communication was cut off. Any departure from the above will be dealt with by the military authorities. Merchants and holders of provision stocks are hereby empowered to sell only in such quantities as they deem necessary, according to the number in the purchaser's family."

All stores were ordered to close at 5.30 o'clock in the evening, excepting Saturdays, when they might keep open two hours later.

From that best of South African journals, the *Cape Times*, I take the liberty of quoting an account of the military movements which took place during the siege and defence of the town. Of other matters, the health and comparative happiness of the people, their unvarying good behaviour, and the manner in which their stores were husbanded without consequent privation, there is little or nothing to be said.

Several runners who came to Methuen's army reported at different times that the feeding of the native labourers, in the compounds at the mines, gave the authorities a great deal of trouble and uneasiness. There were thousands of these blacks. Twice they had been released, and had started for

their distant homes, but had each time been turned back by the Boers.

But to adhere to what I know. Every night during all those weeks Kimberley flashed its searchlight signal "All well" to General Methuen and his force—every night but one, I should say, for there was one night, that of the battle of Modder River (November 28th), when we did not dare to communicate with them lest the Boers should shell our searchlight.

That was a sorry night for the Kimberley folk, because they had heard our guns and had counted upon a report of our victory. They roamed their streets all night, and, getting no signal from us by daybreak, retired to their beds crushed by the fear that we had been beaten—as, alas! we were to be at the very next encounter, five miles onward, at Maaghersfontein.

On October 24th a hot engagement took place outside Kimberley. Before daybreak a patrol of Mounted Police and Volunteers was despatched under Colonel Scott-Turner to make a reconnaissance northward, beyond Macfarlane's Farm. An armoured train supported them. Colonel Scott-Turner made early contact with the enemy, who were first seen in scattered parties but quickly

appeared in considerable force, endeavouring by manœuvres to the right to get between him and the armoured train.

Learning that fighting had begun, Colonel Kekewich sent a train with a detachment of the North Lancashires, commanded by Major Murray, and two guns and the Diamond Fields Artillery, with Captain May.

The enemy despatched a force to intercept the guns, occupying a strong position on a wooded ridge on the right of the road, and opened fire furiously at eight hundred yards range before our guns were unlimbered.

At the critical moment the North Lancashires returned to the train, which had gone further north, and attacked the kopjes, driving the enemy out, the volley-firing being effective. The Boers then beat a hasty retreat. The body of Commandant Botha of Boshof, the Boer leader, was found shot with a Lee-Metford bullet through the right breast. Our losses were four killed and nineteen wounded. The Boer loss was heavy.

On November 16th a force of mounted men, with a detachment of Volunteer Artillery, made a sortie under Colonel Scott-Turner.

A somewhat heavy mist delayed the advance,

and as it lifted the Boers were discovered in possession of the schanzes between Carter's Farm and the reservoir. The enemy at once opened fire, and several of our men were hit during the first few volleys. Our guns and Maxims were at once brought into action, and the Royal Artillery shelled the Boers' guns posted on the ridge above the lazaretto.

The fight lasted from ten minutes past five o'clock to half-past six o'clock, when Colonel Scott-Turner, having ascertained that the enemy were in force, returned to Kimberley. The British loss was one killed and eight wounded. Seven Boers were killed and several wounded.

In the sortie which took place a week later Major Scott-Turner met his death while gallantly leading his men to the attack in an engagement at Coster's Farm.

The Kimberley sortie was made with a view of capturing a large Boer gun which had been placed in the vicinity of the lazaretto. The force rushed Coster's Farm, and proceeded to take the redoubts leading to the gun. They took four of these strongholds, but at the last redoubt the Boers sent a heavy fire into the force, and our men retired to Coster's Farm.

While Lord Methuen was engaging the enemy the bombardment of Kimberley, which had been almost incessant from the middle of October, eased off considerably, but after Maaghersfontein it was renewed with considerable vigour. The shells, however, did comparatively little harm.

About the middle of November shells made at De Beers workshops were used by the garrison with telling effect, and early in January a 28-pounder gun was manufactured at the De Beers workshops, and was christened "Long Cecil" as a tribute to Mr. Rhodes, who had exhibited the greatest coolness during the siege, devoting his leisure to providing comforts to the wounded, and planting trees to form what will be known in history as Siege Avenue.

Heliographic communication with Kimberley was established on December 4th.

The local paper of December 25th said: Excepting two or three of our inhabitants, who shared the terrible privations during the siege of Paris, few of us have ever spent such a Christmas before, and few will ever care to spend such a Christmas again.

There was a scarcity of turkeys and plum-pudding this time, and of the traditional plenty, but

this only distressed the gourmand. The majority of the people of Kimberley are happily made of sterner stuff, and do not look for luxuries during a time of siege. Nevertheless, Mr. Rhodes has again come to the rescue, and is providing some forty plum-puddings cooked at the Sanatorium, for distribution between the various camps.

Seasonable wishes are freely interchanged by telephone. "Best wishes and a larger range to your guns" was received by the Royal Artillery from the Mounted Camp, to which the following reply was sent: "Good wishes reciprocated. May our range be always long enough to be a guardian angel to the Mounted Corps." Notwithstanding the festivities, additional precautions were taken to prevent the enemy from catching us napping.

Later news showed that the bombardment continued, that "Long Cecil" replied to the enemy's attack, and that the garrison suffered little or no loss. On the 9th of February the despatch of press messages from Kimberley was temporarily forbidden, owing presumably to the necessity for reticence as to the initial stages of the progress of General French, so quickly to be attended with the happiest result to the patient and hopeful little beleaguered city.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS SINCE THE RELIEF OF KIMBERLEY

THE general narrative of the campaign breaks off in the preceding chapters at various interesting points. Kimberley has been relieved, and the first step has been taken towards recovering the ground lost when Lord Methuen received his check at Maaghersfontein.

Not a moment was lost by Lord Roberts in pushing his advantage home. On the day following the Relief of Kimberley he pressed resolutely forward and occupied Jacobsdal, which is well within the Free State territory. His strategy was so well planned that the Boers under General Cronje, who had so stubbornly resisted the advance of Lord Methuen, precipitately fled from their trenches at Maaghersfontein, their places being taken by the British Guards. General French, with his cavalry, and Kelly-Kenny, with the Sixth Division, at once started in pursuit, and a general movement was developed by means of which Cronje's force was, on the 7th February, overtaken and completely surrounded at Paardeberg.

The Boer General, with rare sagacity for one who was already in a hopeless position, established himself in the bed of the Modder River, and there entrenched himself within an area of one square mile, in the hope that reinforcements would come up either from Ladysmith or Cape Colony and rescue him from his pursuers. But his hope was vain. Lord Roberts commenced a terrific bombardment of his laager. It is said that no fewer than one hundred and ten guns were concentrated upon him and his unfortunate forces.

Lord Roberts beat off comparatively small bodies of reinforcements which ventured into the neighbourhood, and on the 19th General Cronje, apparently realising the futility of further resistance, asked for an armistice. To this request Lord Kitchener gave the now historical reply, "Not a minute," and the bombardment was continued more furiously than ever. The British General's final defeat of the Boer reinforcements took place on the 20th. The indomitable Cronje still held out, however, and during the next seven days showed a tenacity of purpose which marks him as one of the most stubborn soldiers who ever lived.

On the 27th he abandoned his last hope, and,

by a happy chance on the anniversary of Majuba Day, surrendered to Lord Roberts with over four thousand officers and men.

The news, as may be imagined, was received in Great Britain and throughout the Empire with the wildest enthusiasm, especially on account of the fact that the chief honours of the final rush which settled Cronje's fate were shared with the Gordon Highlanders by the Canadians.

General Cronje was sent as a prisoner to Cape-town, in charge of General Pretyman, and Roberts continued his march on the Orange capital. On Tuesday, March 13th, the first part of the campaign from Cape Colony was brought to a glorious conclusion, Lord Roberts being able on the evening of that day, in a dispatch which will long be memorable, to telegraph to his Government :—

"By the help of God and by the bravery of her Majesty's soldiers, the troops under my command have taken possession of Bloemfontein.

"The British flag now flies over the Presidency, vacated last evening by Mr. Steyn, late President of the Orange Free State."

Meanwhile great events were happening in Natal. The main narrative closed with the failure

of General Buller's third attempt to relieve Ladysmith. That was on February 7th. It was not until the 20th that a further effort was made, and General Hart crossed the Tugela and occupied Colenso. Even then it seemed impossible for the gallant British troops to make headway, for General Buller himself was on the south of the Tugela six days later. Majuba Day, however, brought luck to Buller as it had done to Roberts. Pieter's Hill was stormed and the Boers' main position was carried. Buller had fought for four days and had sustained severe losses throughout. The renowned Inniskillings were almost destroyed. Buller reported afterwards, however, that the victory he had gained far exceeded his expectations.

The road was at last cleared to Ladysmith. Lord Dundonald, at the head of his cavalry, which had done such splendid service before the battle of Spion Kop, succeeded in penetrating through the intervening country, and actually entered the beleaguered town on February 28th. The formal entry of General Buller into Ladysmith occurred three days later, and thus the long siege, which had lasted from November 2nd, was triumphantly brought to an end.

It should not be overlooked that, ever since we

had any news from Ladysmith at all, we had had nothing but the most cheerful reports declaring the garrison to be in the best of spirits, and to be well provided with food and ammunition. The world now learned that they had undergone unheard-of privations, that the whole camp was a hospital, that the artillery ammunition was practically exhausted, and that both the military and the civil population were reduced to the last extremity. It was, indeed, a community of living skeletons which greeted its deliverer.

Again, as when Kimberley was relieved and when Cronje surrendered, there was unbounded rejoicing among Britons all over the world.

A few lines are necessary to summarise one branch of the campaign which has not yet been noticed—the campaign along the Orange River in the north and north-east of Cape Colony.

General Gatacre, with the Third Division, which had been broken off from the original Army Corps and had now become a rather weak and confused independent force, was sent to stem the tide of Boer invasion, and to check, if possible, the spreading spirit of revolt among the Cape Dutch. It was obvious from the first that he had an arduous task before him. After the battle of

Elandslaagte, in Natal, General French was sent round to his assistance, and speedily, with his cavalry, made a strong impression upon the enemy. He could not, however, effect much beyond reconnaissances, and even these did not save General Gatacre from a severe reverse when, in attacking Stormberg on December 10th, he was misled by his guides into what was practically an ambuscade and lost hundreds of his men. Since that date General Gatacre has done but little. The operations of Lord Roberts on the Modder River and of Buller on the Tugela has at length, however, relieved the pressure in the Stormberg region and enabled Gatacre with his whole force to cross the Orange River and occupy Bethulie. His field of action is thus transferred to the Orange Free State, where he will doubtless co-operate with Roberts.

There are still two minor operations to be noticed, the peculiar circumstances of which have caused them to arouse an enormous amount of public interest. The first is the gallant stand which Colonel Plumer with a mere handful of men has made on the Transvaal-Rhodesia frontier. He has not only prevented the Boers from invading Rhodesia, but he has been able

to clear them out of the surrounding country and to make a memorable march southward.

The object of his march was to relieve a garrison which may be said to have supplied the most romantic episode of the war. At Mafeking, the frontier village from which Dr. Jameson started on his famous raid, Colonel Baden-Powell was beleaguered by a large Boer force, which was at first under command of the redoubtable Cronje.

The actual investment took place about the middle of October, and there is no authentic news that it is ended even yet. It is impossible to exaggerate the admiration which has been felt for the little garrison, whose real sufferings will probably be found to have eclipsed even those of Ladysmith, and who may well repeat on their own behalf Sir George White's proud boast "that at all events he had kept the British flag flying."

News that Mafeking has been relieved will remove the last vestige of suspense which has hung over the British people ever since the war began, and will help to crown its successful issue.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CHIEF EVENTS OF THE WAR.

1899.
OCT. 10.—Boer ultimatum delivered.
11.—War begins.

I.

NATAL CAMPAIGN.

12.—Boer troops entered Natal.
13.—Newcastle abandoned.
14.—Newcastle occupied by Boers.
18.—Action near Acton Homes.
Boers advanced towards Glencoe.
19.—Train captured by the Boers at Elandslaagte.
20.—Battle of Glencoe.
Boers capture large number of Hussars.
21.—Battle at Elandslaagte.
Second attack on Glencoe.
22.—General Yule retreated from Dundee.
23.—Boers entered Dundee.
Death of General Symons.
24.—Engagement at Rietfontein.
26.—General Yule's column arrived at Ladysmith.
30.—Disaster of Nicholson's Nek.
31.—Sir Redvers Buller arrived at Capetown.
NOV. 2.—Colenso evacuated.
Ladysmith isolated and communication cut off.
9.—British victory at Ladysmith.
15.—Armoured train derailed at Chieveley: Mr. Winston Spencer Churchill captured.
23.—Engagement at Beacon Hills.
25.—Sir Redvers Buller's arrival in Natal.
26.—British advance from Estcourt.
28.—Boers blew up Colenso Bridge.
DEC. 8.—Sortie from Ladysmith. Three large Boer guns destroyed and Maxim captured.

DEC. 10.—Sortie from Ladysmith. Gun blown up.
14.—Mr. Winston Spencer Churchill reported to have escaped from Pretoria.
15.—Sir Redvers Buller suffered reverse while attempting to force the passage of the Tugela.
21.—Mr. Winston Churchill arrived at Lourenço Marques.
JAN. 6.—Boer attacks in force on Ladysmith beaten off.
10.—Forward movement for the relief of Ladysmith.
11.—Sir Redvers Buller occupied the south bank of the Tugela at Potgieter's Drift.
Lord Dundonald and Mounted Brigade crossed the Tugela at Potgieter's Drift.
15.—Death of Mr. G. W. Steevens, Correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, at Ladysmith.
16.—General Lyttelton's Brigade crossed the Tugela at Potgieter's Drift.
17.—Sir Charles Warren's Division crossed the Tugela at Trichard's Drift.
General Lyttelton's Brigade shelled the Boers.
18.—The Tugela bridged and crossed by a brigade and battery.
20.—Sir C. Warren moved towards Spion Kop.
21.—Heavy fighting by General Clery's forces.
22.—Sir C. Warren's entire army engaged.
23.—Spion Kop captured by Sir C. Warren : General Woodgate wounded.
25.—Abandonment of Spion Kop.
27.—Sir C. Warren's force withdrawn to the south of the Tugela.
FEB. 5.—General Buller crossed the Tugela at Manger's Drift.
6.—General Buller captured Vaal Krantz Hill.
7.—Vaal Krantz Hill evacuated and the Tugela recrossed.
General Buller captured Monte Cristo.
20.—General Hart crossed the Tugela and occupied Colenso.
26.—General Buller returned to the south of the Tugela.
27.—Pieter's Hill stormed and Boers' main position carried.
28.—Relief of Ladysmith.
MAR. 2.—General Buller formally entered Ladysmith.
16.—General Buller still at Ladysmith.

2.

ORANGE FREE STATE CAMPAIGN.

OCT. 12.—Mr. Rhodes arrived at Kimberley.
20.—Fighting near Kimberley.
NOV. 2.—Fighting on Tatham's Farm, near Besters.
3.—Stormberg abandoned.
10.—Engagement to the east of Belmont: Colonel Keith-Falconer killed.
12.—Lord Methuen arrived at Orange River.
20.—Lord Methuen's force reached Witteputs.
23.—Battle of Belmont.
25.—Battle of Enslin.
28.—Battle of Modder River.
Boer laager near Kimberley captured.
DEC. 8.—Engagement at Graspan.
10.—Lord Methuen moved forward from Modder River and bombarded enemy's trenches.
11.—Battle of Maaghersfontein: General Wauchope killed.
12.—Lord Methuen retired to Modder Bridge.
23.—Departure of Lord Roberts from Southampton.
JAN. 9.—British troops invaded Free State Territory near Jacobsdal.
10.—Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener arrived at Cape-town.
FEB. 4.—General Macdonald occupied Koodoe's Drift.
9.—General Macdonald retired to Modder River.
Lord Roberts arrived at Modder River.
13.—General French forced Klip Drift and captured three Boer laagers.
14.—Lord Roberts advanced to Dekil's Drift.
15.—General French reached and relieved Kimberley, captured Boer laager and supplies, and dispersed the enemy.
16.—Lord Roberts occupied Jacobsdal.
Flight of Cronje's force and occupation of Maaghers-fontein by the Guards.
17.—Cronje's force overtaken and surrounded at Paarde-berg.

FEB. 18.—Cronje's laager bombarded, and General Macdonald wounded.

19.—Cronje asked for armistice, but Lord Kitchener demanded his unconditional surrender; Cronje refused, and was then bombarded heavily.

Lord Roberts defeated Boer reinforcements at Paardeberg.

27.—General Cronje surrendered to Lord Roberts with 4,000 officers and men (Majuba Day).

MAR. 2.—General Cronje arrived as prisoner at Capetown.

6.—The Presidents' telegram proposing peace received.

7.—Lord Roberts dispersed Boers near Poplar Grove.

8.—Severe battle at Poplar Grove: Kruger and Steyn present. Boers routed.

10.—Abuse of white flag witnessed by Lord Roberts and staff.

Battle of Driefontein. 102 Boers found dead.

11.—Lord Salisbury's reply sent to Presidents refusing their terms.

12.—Aasvogel Kop, near Bloemfontein, occupied by British. Kruger's appeal to Germany rejected.

13.—Surrender of Bloemfontein.

Roberts enters Bloemfontein and hoists the British flag. Flight of Steyn. Publication of "Peace" telegrams. Boer independence refused.

16.—Great movement to effect junction between Roberts and Gatacre.

Lord Methuen at Warenton on his way to relieve Mafeking.

3.

CENTRAL CAPE CAMPAIGN.

NOV. 1.—Free State Boers enter Cape Colony and seize Colesberg.

5.—Bridges over Orange River wrecked by the Boers.

DEC. 10.—General Gatacre suffers reverse in attacking Stormberg.

13.—Successful skirmish near Naauwpoort.

24.—Dordrecht occupied by British troops.

JAN. 1.—Successful action by General French at Colesberg. Surrender of Kuruman to the Boers.

JAN. 3.—Boers surrounded at Colesberg; fighting in the hills. Engagement at Molteno.
4.—Enemy completely retired from Molteno. Further fighting near Colesberg.
6.—Company of the 1st Suffolk Regiment captured at Colesberg.
15.—Boers attacked General French and were repulsed.
FEB. 18.—General Brabant occupied Dordrecht.
27.—Rensburg re-occupied by General Clements.
28.—General Clements re-occupied Colesberg.
MAR. 5.—General Gatacre occupied Stormberg.
7.—General Gatacre reached Burghersdorp.
8.—General Clements occupied Norval's Pont.
11.—Aliwal North and Barkly East recovered.
15.—Gatacre crossed Orange River and occupied Bethulie. Bethulie Bridge saved. Gatacre crosses Orange River and invades Orange Free State. Boers in full flight.
16.—Gatacre moves north to join Roberts.

4.

NORTHERN CAMPAIGN.

OCT. 13.—Fighting near Mafeking.
27.—Sortie from Mafeking.
NOV. 1.—General assault at Mafeking.
2.—Loss of a convoy from Colonel Plumer's force in South Rhodesia.
3.—Successful sortie from Mafeking.
6.—Successful assault on enemy's position at Mafeking.
DEC. 3.—Colonel Plumer enters the Transvaal.
6.—Engagement at Mochudi.
26.—Mafeking force attacked a Boer fort.
JAN. 1.—Successful action by Colonel Pilcher at Douglas.
MAR. 5.—Plumer at Lobatsi, and marching on Mafeking.
6.—Mafeking still safe, but much distressed.

APPENDIX B

ARMY DECORATIONS AND PROMOTIONS FOR GALLANTRY, ETC., AT THE SEAT OF WAR.

V.C.

Announced February 2, 1900.

Captain W. N. Congreve, Rifle Brigade, Colenso, Dec. 15, 1899.
Late Lieut. Hon. F. H. S. Roberts, K.R.R., Colenso, Dec. 15, 1899.
Corporal G. E. Nurse, R.F.A., Colenso, Dec. 15, 1899.
Captain H. L. Reed, R.F.A., Colenso, Dec. 15, 1899.

Distinguished Service in the Field (D.S.O.).

Announced February 2, 1900.

Corporal A. Clark,	Colenso, Dec. 15, 1899.	
„ R. J. Money,	„	„
Acting Bombardier J. H. Reeve,	„	„
Driver H. Taylor,	„	„
„ H. G. Young,	„	„
„ J. E. Petts,	„	„
„ G. Rockall,	„	„
„ E. W. Lucas,	„	„
„ F. Williams,	„	„
„ C. J. Woodward,	„	„
„ W. Robertson,	„	„
„ W. Wright,	„	„
„ A. C. Hawkins,	„	„
„ J. P. Lennox,	„	„
„ A. Nugent (late)	„	„
„ J. Warden,	„	„
„ A. Felton,	„	„
„ T. Musgrove,	„	„
Trumpeter W. W. Ayles,	„	„

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE IN THE FIELD (D.S.O.)—(*continued*).

Announced March 13, 1900.

Private G. H. Day, 6th Dragoon Guards, Arundel.

ARMY PROMOTIONS.

Announced February 19, 1900.

Colonel and local Lieut.-General French, Major-General, Relief of Kimberley, Feb. 16, 1900.

Lieut.-Colonel Kekewich, Colonel. Relief of Kimberley, Feb. 16 1900.

NAVAL PROMOTIONS.

C.B.

Announced March 13, 1900.

Captain Hon. H. Lambton, H.M.S. *Terrible*, for services in South Africa.

Captain Percy M. Scott, H.M.S. *Terrible*, for services in South Africa.

Lieut. F. C. A. Ogilvy, H.M.S. *Terrible*, to be Commander, for services under Sir R. Buller.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Bugler Dunn, 1st Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Colenso, Dec. 15, 1899. Received by Queen Feb. 19, 1900, and presented with silver bugle.

The Irish regiments to wear Shamrock. Order March 8, 1900.

APPENDIX C

THE COMMANDS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Field-Marshal Lord ROBERTS, K.P., V.C., &c., Commander-in-Chief.

Staff.

Major-General Lord Kitchener, G.C.B., Chief of the Staff.
Major-General Pretyman, C.B., Commandant Headquarters, now Military Governor at Bloemfontein.
Major-General G. Marshall, Commanding Royal Artillery.
Major-General E. Wood, C.B., Chief of Engineers.
Surgeon-General W. Wilson, M.B., Principal Medical Officer.
Sir William MacCormac, Bart., K.C.V.O., Chief Consulting Surgeon.
Lieut.-General Sir F. W. E. T. Forestier-Walker, Commanding lines of Communication.
Brigadier-General J. Wolfe Murray, Brigadier on line of Communication.
Major-General Sir F. Carrington, K.C.B., on Special Service.
Major-General W. Kelly, C.B., on Special Service.

LADYSMITH.

Lieut.-General Sir G. White, V.C., In Command (since transferred).
Major-General Sir A. Hunter, Second in Command.
Acting Brigadier-General Colonel Ian Hamilton.
Acting Brigadier-General Colonel F. Howard.
Major-General Brocklehurst, M.V.O., Cavalry.

Army of Relief.

General Sir R. H. Buller, V.C., In Command in Natal.

Generals of Divisions.

Lieut.-General Sir C. F. Clery, 2nd Division.
Lieut.-General Sir C. Warren, 5th Division.

Generals of Brigade.

Major-General Hon. N. G. Lyttelton, 4th Brigade. Acting as General of Division since the withdrawal of General Clery, wounded.
Major-General A. Fitzroy Hart, 5th Brigade.
Major-General G. Barton, 6th Brigade.
Major-General H. J. T. Hildyard, 2nd Brigade.
Major-General A. S. Wynne (vice Woodgate, wounded), 9th Brigade.
Major-General J. T. Coke, 10th Brigade.
Acting Major-General Colonel Kitchener, specially formed Brigade.
Acting Major-General Colonel Northcott, specially formed Brigade.
Acting Major-General Lord Dundonald, Cavalry.

MAIN ARMY UNDER LORD ROBERTS.

Generals of Division.

Lieut.-General Lord Methuen, 1st Division.
Lieut.-General Kelly-Kenny, C.B., 6th Division.
Lieut.-General Tucker, 7th Division.
Acting Lieut.-General Sir H. Colvile, 9th Division.
Acting Lieut.-General J. D. P. French, Cavalry Division.
Acting Lieut.-General J. P. Brabazon, Imperial Yeomanry Division.
Acting Major-General J. M. Babington, Assistant-Adjutant-General.

Generals of Brigade—Infantry.

Major-General Pole-Carew, 1st Brigade.
Major-General Douglas, 9th Brigade.
Major-General H. Macdonald, 3rd Brigade.
Major-General Knox (wounded), 12th Brigade.
Major-General Smith Dorrien, 13th Brigade.
Major-General Sir H. Chermside, 14th Brigade.
Major-General A. G. Wavell, 15th Brigade.

Generals of Brigade—Cavalry and Mounted Infantry.

Acting Major-General Broadwood (10th Hussars), 1st Cavalry Brigade.
„ Major-General Porter (6th Dragoon Guards), 2nd Cavalry Brigade.
„ Major-General Gordon (16th Lancers), 3rd Cavalry Brigade.
„ Major-General Henry, Mounted Infantry Brigade.
„ Major-General Ridley, Mounted Infantry Brigade.

The name of the commander of the third mounted infantry brigade, in succession to Acting Major-General Hannay, recently killed, has not yet been announced.

Central Columns: North Cape Colony.

Sterkstroom Column : Lieut.-General Sir W. F. Gatacre.
Rensburg Column : Major-General R. A. P. Clements, D.S.O.
Dordrecht Column : Major-General Brabant, Commanding Colonial Mounted Infantry Division.

En route to the Cape.

Lieut.-General Sir H. M. Rundle, 8th Division.
Major-General Campbell, M.V.O., 16th Brigade.
Major-General J. E. Boyes, 17th Brigade.
Major-General J. B. B. Dickson, C.B., 4th Cavalry Brigade.

APPENDIX D

TABLES OF BRITISH AND BOER ORDNANCE.[1]

THE following tables are not intended to set up invidious comparisons between our own and the foreign-made artillery, with which our enemy has equipped himself; their mission is simply to furnish information concerning a subject which of all military subjects is the most difficult for the civilian to follow intelligently. The headings, by the side of which the various details of dimension, weight, &c., connected with each piece of ordnance, together with those of its projectiles, are arranged, have been carefully selected so as to show all that it is most important to show without entering into abstruse technicalities.

These headings, such as "Gun," "Construction," "Calibre," &c., explain themselves, but a few words may be added concerning "Maximum Range with Common Shell." This, in fact, is intended to demonstrate the maximum effective range of the gun, which is always based upon range practice with this particular type of projectile, the reason being that the other two standard types—viz., shrapnel and case shot—either by their mechanism or construction, themselves govern the range at which they can be employed. For example, the time fuse, upon which the efficacy of the shrapnel shell rests, is not yet constructed to act at ranges beyond 5,000 yards; while case shot, which consists of a canister of balls that separate from their envelope on leaving the muzzle, is not effective beyond 800 yards from sheer lack of motive power. But common shell, or locomotive mine, bursts upon impact, which may mean not till it has reached the limit of the force exercised by the carrying powers of its gun.

Elevation, again, has much to do with the question of range. The provision for high elevation alone accounts for the marked superiority in this particular exhibited by the 15 cm. and 12 cm. Creusot guns over our 4·7 in., 6 in., and 12-pounder naval guns, also by the 14½-pounder Creusot field piece over our 15-pounder. Our naval guns, it must be remembered, have been primarily designed

[1] (Reprinted by the kind permission of the Editor of the *Daily Chronicle*.)

for use against ships on ships or coast defences, and in these circumstances they employ of course armour-piercing shells. The latter must penetrate the target aimed at, hence in their flight flatness of trajectory is essential. Now it stands to reason that flatness of trajectory vanishes when the gun is fired at anything above a small angle of elevation. Therefore, the distances scheduled in the following tables, which are those for which the three pieces are sighted in their normal employment, are doubtless being greatly exceeded from the extra elevation that is sure to have been allowed for in Captain Scott's land carriages. In the case of the field guns mentioned, our 15-pounder cannot be elevated more than 16 degrees, as compared to the 20 degrees of the Boer weapon—a difference quite sufficient to account for the superiority of the latter in maximum range :—

TABLE A.—BRITISH GUNS OF POSITION.

	Naval Service.			Siege Train.		
	*	*	*	Land Service.		Howitzer.
	4 p7 Q.F. B.L. Gun	6 in. Q.F. B.L. Gun	12-pr. Q.F. B.L. Gun	5 in. B.L. Gun	4 in. B.L. Gun	6 in. B.L.
Construction	Wire	Wire	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel
Calibre, inches.....	4.72	6	3	5	4	6
Total length of gun, inches.....	195.1	249.2	123.6	139.5	120	94
Nominal weight of gun, including breech	42 cwt.	7 tons	12 cwt.	40 cwt.	26 cwt.	30 cwt.
Muzzle velocity, feet per second.....	2,188	2,000	2,210	1,750	1,900	779
If Q.F., rate of aimed fire per minute.....	? †	? †	? †	—	—	—
Projectiles.....	Common Shell	Common Shell	Common Shell	Common Shell Shrapnel	Common Shell Shrapnel	Common Shell Shrapnel
Weight of ditto, lbs.	45	100	12.5	50	25	118½
Explosive in Common Shells	Lyddite	Lyddite or Powder	Powder	Lyddite	Powder	Lyddite
Bullets in Shrapnel	—	—	—	236	134	518
Max. Range with Common Shell, yds.	9,000	10,000	8,000	8,700	7,700	10,000

* These three types of Naval Guns are all mounted upon Captain Percy Scott's improvised land carriages. The 6 in. gun was taken from the *Terrible* on Feb. 12th, or thereabouts, and sent to Durban on a Scott carriage.

† It is impossible to estimate the rate of fire per minute when mounted upon improvised carriages.

TABLE B.—BOER GUNS OF POSITION.

Gun	24 cm. Creusot Fortress Gun*	15 cm. Creusot Q.F. "Long" Gun of Position†	12 cm. Krupp B.L. Howitzer‡	12 cm. Creusot Gun of Position	
Construction	Coiled Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	
Calibre, inches	9.45	5.9	4.72	4.72	
Total length of gun	263.3 in.	153.5	45 in.	122.8	
Nominal weight of gun, including breech	13.78 tons	2.71 tons	8.8 cwt.	1.37 tons	
Muzzle veloc. ft. per sec.	1,732	1,879	?	1,706	
If Q.F., rate of aimed fire per minute	—	8	—	—	
Projectiles	Common Shell	Common Shell Shrapnel	Common Shell Shrapnel	Common Shell Shrapnel	
Weight of do., lbs.	346	94	44	39.7	
Explosive in Com. Shell	Melinite	Melinite	Powder	Melinite	
Bullets in Shrapnel	—	?	460	?	
Max. Rge. with Com. Shl.	17,500	11,537§	6,342	11,000§	

Also a 90 mm. (3.54 in. gun of position, weighing 10.4 cwt., weight of projectile 17 lb., muzzle velocity 1,508 ft. per second. No other details available.

* Fortunately, there appears to be some doubt whether these formidable pieces, intended for the forts at Pretoria, have ever reached here.

† The travelling carriages for these guns are very light and simple. They are especially adapted to defend entrenchments, or, in fact, for any purpose which requires a frequent change of position.

‡ The South African Republic possesses only one or two of these howitzers.

§ With the elevation of 35 degrees.

TABLE C.—BRITISH FIELD GUNS.

	Horse Batteries.	Field Batteries.	Howitzer Batteries.	Mountain Batteries.	Naval Brigade.*
Gun	12-pr. B.L.	15-p. B.L.	5 in. B.L.	7-p. R.M.L.	12-p. Q.F.B.L.
Construction	Wire	Steel	Steel	Steel Jointed	Steel
Calibre, inches	3	3	5	2.5	3
Total Length of Gun, inches	66.75	92.35	49	70.45	87.6
Nominal weight of gun, including breech	6 cwt.	7 cwt.	9½ cwt.	400 lbs.	8 cwt.
Muzzle velocity, feet per second	1,553	1,574	782	1,440	1,607
If Q.F., rate of aimed fire per minute	—	6 to 8†	—	—	8
Projectiles	Shrapnel	Shrapnel, Case	Com. Shell Shrapnel	Ring Shell, Shrapnel, Star Shell	Common Shell
Weight of ditto, lbs.	12.5	15	50	7½	12.5
Explosive in Common Shell	—	—	Lyddite	Black Powder	Powder
Bullets in Shrapnel	162	210	372	101	—
Max. Range with Common Shell, yards	4,500	5,500	4,900	3,185	6,000

* These Field Guns carried by our warships are available, but have not yet been utilised.

† With Sir G. Clarke's "spade" apparatus.

Table D.—Boer Field Guns.

	Quick Firing Guns.			
Gun	14½-pr. Creusot, Model, 1895	7.5 cm. Maxim-Nordenfeldt	*37 mm. Maxim	75 mm. Krupp B.L. Field Gun.
Construction	Nickel Steel	Steel	Steel	Nickel Steel
Calibre, inches	2.96	2.96	1.45	2.96
Total length of gun, in.	98	?	73.75	70.8
Nominal weight of gun, including breech, cwt.	6¼ cwt.	6 cwt.	4 cwt.	5¾ cwt.
Muzzle vel., ft. per sec.	1,837	1,640	1,800	1,476
If Q.F., rate of aimed fire per minute	8 to 10	10	300	—
Projectiles	Shrapnel	Common Shell Shrapnel	Small Explosive Shell	Common Shell Shrapnel
Weight of do., lb.	14.5	13¾	1 lb.	12
Explosive in Com. Shell	—	Melinite	Powder	Black Powder
Bullets in Shrapnel	234	250	—	250
Max. Range with Common Shell, yards	8,700†	6,000	4,000	5,000

Also some 2.5 in. R.M.L. Mountain Guns (see Table C), and 12-pr. B.L. Field Guns (see Table E), all purchased in this country *circa* 1894.

* Nicknamed by our troops the "Pom-Poms." The British Government has now purchased some of these. † With the elevation of 20 degrees.

Table E.—British Field Guns (Volunteer Contingents*).

	Hon. Artillery Co.	South African Local Corps			
Gun	12½-pr. Q.F. B.L. Vick.-Max.	12-pr. B.L. Mark I.	9-pr. R.M.L.	7-pr. R.M.L.	3-pr. Hotch. Q.F. Gun.
Construction	Steel and Wire	Steel	Wrought Iron and Steel	Steel	Steel
Calibre, inches	3	3	3	2.94	1.85
Total length of gun, in.	75.5	92.35	74.5	41	80.6
Nominal weight of gun including breech	5.5 cwt.	7 cwt.	6 cwt.	200 lbs.	5 cwt.
Muzzle vel., ft. per sec.	1,720	1,574	1,330	950	1,873
If Q.F., rate of aimed fire per minute	14 to 18†	—	—	—	25
Projectiles	Shrapnel Case shot	Common Shell Shrapnel Case	Common Shell Shrapnel Case	Double Shell (Studded) Com. Shll. Shrapnel (Studded)	Common Shell
Weight of ditto, lbs.	12.5	12.5	C.S. 9 lb. Shr. 9 lb. 12 oz.	7¼	3
Explosive in Common Shell	—	Powder	Powder	Powder	Powder
Bullets in Shrapnel	162	177	63	42	—
Maximum Range, with Common Shell, yards	6,500	4,500	4,000	3,000	4,000

* Canadian and New South Wales Artillery Contingents are equipped with 15-pr. Q.F. B.L. Guns, same as those scheduled in Table C, while the gun detachment is protected by bullet-proof shields on the carriage.

† Eighteen shots per minute possible with case shot only.

APPENDIX E

OFFICIAL TABLE OF CASUALTIES.

THE WAR OFFICE HAS ISSUED THE FOLLOWING LIST OF CASUALTIES IN THE FIELD FORCE, SOUTH AFRICA, UP TO AND INCLUDING MARCH 10.

Casualties in Action. — Name of Engagement.	Killed.		Wounded.		Died of Wounds (Included in Wounded).		Missing and Prisoners.*		Total Killed, Wounded, Missing, and Prisoners.	
	Officers.	N.C.O.'s and Men.	Officers.	N.C.O.'s and Men.	Officers.	N.C.O.'s and Men.	Officers.	N.C.O.'s and Men.	Officers.	N.C.O.'s and Men.
Total casualties reported up to and including March 10—										
Belmont, Nov. 23	3	50	25	220	1	21	..	..	28	270
Colenso, Dec. 15	7	125	43	722	2	20	21	207	71	1,054
Dundee, Oct. 20	8	40	11	84	3	..	25	306	44	430
Elandslaagte, Oct. 21	5	50	30	169	..	4	..	4	35	223
Enslin (Graspan), Nov. 25	3	13	6	163	1	3	..	9	9	185
Farquhar's Farm and Nicholson's Nek, Oct. 30	6	54	9	231	..	3	43	906†	58	1,191
Klip Kraal, Feb. 16	..	11	6	100	..	..	..	7	6	118
Maagher sfontein, Dec. 11	23	148	45	647	3	35	..	107	68	902
Monte Cristo (Colenso), &c., Feb. 15 to 18	1	13	8	155	..	..	..	2	9	170
Modder River, Nov. 28	4	66	20	393	..	31	..	2	24	461
Natal, Feb. 14 to 27	23	260	78	1,755	2	59	1	45	102	2,060
Paardeberg, Feb. 16 to 27	17	221	74	1,133	6	40	8	85	99	1,439
Potgieter's Drift, Feb. 5 to 7	2	23	18	326	..	7	..	5	20	354
Rietfontein, Oct. 24	1	11	6	98	..	3	..	2	7	111
Spion Kop, &c., Jan. 17 to 24	27	246	53	1,056	4	30	7	340	87	1,642
Stormberg, Dec. 10	..	31	7	51	..	1	13	620	20	702
Willow Grange, Nov. 23	..	11	1	66	..	2	1	8	2	85
At Ladysmith during investment—										
Battle of Jan. 6	14	143	31	228	4	18	..	2	45	373
Other casualties	5	55	29	215	2	25	..	9	34	279
At Kimberley during investment	2	29	13	98	..	4	1	..	16	127
At Mafeking	3	59	8	136	..	4	..	34	13	219
Other Casualties	38	188	80	719	12	55	30	672	148	1,579
Total reported up to March 10	194	1,847	601	8,755	40	365	150	3,372†	945	13,974

Other Casualties.	Officers.	N.C.O.'s and Men.
Total up to and including March 10—		
Died of disease in South Africa	26	904
Accidental deaths in South Africa	2	23
Invalids sent home—		
Wounded	38	986
Sick	24	1,337
Not specified which	41	448

Other Casualties.	Officers.	N.C.O.'s and Men.
Total losses in the Field Force, South Africa, excluding sick and wounded men still in British hospitals in South Africa, up to March 10—		
Killed in action	194	1,847
Died of wounds	40	365
Missing and prisoners	150	3,372†
Died of disease	26	904
Accidental deaths	2	23
Sent home as invalids	103	2,771
Total	515	9,282
Total losses (exclusive of sick and wounded men now in British hospitals in South Africa)	9,797	

* A complete list of prisoners has not been obtained.
† Including missing men of Royal Irish Fusiliers, numbers not reported, but estimated at 442.

APPENDIX F

GLOSSARY OF BOER TERMS AND THEIR ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS, SPECIALLY PREPARED BY A JOHANNESBURGER FOR THIS VOLUME.

Berg = mountain.
Boom = tree.
Bosch = bush.
Bron = spring.
Brug = bridge. Compare Scotch and Old English "brig."
Bult = a smooth ride, in contradistinction to "rand," a "down."
Burg = town, borough, or burgh.
Dorp = thorp, hamlet, or village.
Fontein = spring.
Heil = health.
Heilbron = spring of health.
Kaallaagte = bare valley
Kameel = not camel, but giraffe. Kameelfontein is "Fountain of the Giraffes."
Kloof = a gap, *cloven* between two hills.
Kraal = a corruption of a word cognate to corral. An enclosure for cattle.
Kopje = peak, rather than hill. It may, however, be used to indicate the latter.
Laager = a fortification made by placing waggons in a circle, locking their poles together, and filling up all gaps with thorny mimosa bushes or other obstructions. It is now often used merely to denote a camp.
Laagte = valley.
Paard, or perd = horse.
Raad = Council, but is usually qualified by a prefix. Uitvoerende Raad is the Executive Council. Volksraad is one of the deliberative assemblies or parliaments.

Raadhuis = House of Parliament, but not used in Pretoria, as two chambers are set apart in the Government Buildings there (Gouvernements Gebouwen) for the two assemblies. These chambers are each known as a "raadzaal." Compare French *salle.*

Rand = means a rough ridge when describing natural features.

Riem = thong of dressed leather used to couple yoked oxen together.

Riet = reed or wild cane.

Rivier = a river.

Ronde = round.

Ruigte = scrubby copse.

Sjambok = a whip of giraffe or other tough hide—pronounced shambok.

Spruit = a small stream.

Sweep = whip.

Vaal = grey. Vaal Rivier is the Grey River.

Veld = not field, as we understand it, but open country like the prairies.

Veld-cornet = Field-cornet.

Veldheer = Commander, but is *not* used in ordinary South African Dutch patois. It is good Dutch, and means a commander of armies. Commandant-General is General, then Commandant District-General, then Field-cornet is a Colonel, or rather a combination of Colonel and Major. Assistant Field-cornet is a Captain. In the artillery the ranks run down from Colonel as with us.

Vlei = a marsh, it is a contraction of vallei, but it does not mean valley.

Volksraad = Parliament.

Vrij = Free. In the English form of any word in which the two letters i j occur together these are amalgamated into y.

Win = to triumph or win, seen in Winburg.

Witwatersrand = Ridge of the white waters.

Zeekoe = Rhinoceros, a word often used in the names of farms.

APPENDIX G

THE PRESIDENTS' TELEGRAM PROPOSING PEACE AND LORD SALISBURY'S REPLY.

No. 1.

The Presidents of the Orange Free State and of the South African Republic to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received March 6.)

BLOEMFONTEIN, *March* 5, 1900.

The blood and the tears of the thousands who have suffered by this war, and the prospect of all the moral and economic ruin with which South Africa is now threatened, make it necessary for both belligerents to ask themselves, dispassionately, and as in the sight of the Triune God, for what they are fighting, and whether the aim of each justifies all this appalling misery and devastation.

With this object, and in view of the assertions of various British statesmen to the effect that this war was begun and is being carried on with the set purpose of undermining her Majesty's authority in South Africa, and of setting up an Administration over all South Africa independent of her Majesty's Government, we consider it our duty solemnly to declare that this war was undertaken solely as a defensive measure to safeguard the threatened independence of the South African Republic, and is only continued in order to secure and safeguard the incontestable independence of both Republics as sovereign international States, and to obtain the assurance that those of her Majesty's subjects who have taken part with us in this war shall suffer no harm whatsoever in person or property.

On these conditions, but on these conditions alone, are we now, as in the past, desirous of seeing peace re-established in South Africa, and of putting an end to the evils now reigning over South Africa; while, if her Majesty's Government is determined to destroy the independence of the Republics, there is nothing left to us and

to our people but to persevere to the end in the course already begun, in spite of the overwhelming pre-eminence of the British Empire, confident that that God who lighted the unextinguishable fire of the love of freedom in the hearts of ourselves and of our fathers will not forsake us, but will accomplish His work in us and in our descendants.

We hesitated to make this declaration earlier to your Excellency, as we feared that as long as the advantage was always on our side, and as long as our forces held defensive positions far in her Majesty's Colonies, such a declaration might hurt the feelings of honour of the British people; but now that the prestige of the British Empire may be considered to be assured by the capture of one of our forces by her Majesty's troops, and that we are thereby forced to evacuate other positions which our forces had occupied, that difficulty is over, and we can no longer hesitate clearly to inform your Government and people in the sight of the whole civilised world why we are fighting, and on what conditions we are ready to restore peace.

No. 2.

The Marquess of Salisbury to the Presidents of the South African Republic and Orange Free State.

FOREIGN OFFICE, *March* 11, 1900.

I have the honour to acknowledge your Honours' telegram dated the 5th of March from Bloemfontein, of which the purport is principally to demand that her Majesty's Government shall recognise the "incontestable independence" of the South African Republic and Orange Free State "as sovereign international States," and to offer, on those terms, to bring the war to a conclusion.

In the beginning of October last peace existed between her Majesty and the two Republics under the Conventions which then were in existence. A discussion had been proceeding for some months between her Majesty's Government and the South African Republic, of which the object was to obtain redress for certain very serious grievances under which British residents in the South African Republic were suffering. In the course of those negotiations, the South African Republic had, to the knowledge of her Majesty's Government, made considerable armaments, and the latter had, consequently, taken steps to provide corresponding reinforcements to the British garrisons of Capetown and Natal.

No infringements of the rights guaranteed by the Conventions had, up to that point, taken place on the British side.

Suddenly, at two days' notice, the South African Republic, after issuing an insulting ultimatum, declared war upon her Majesty and the Orange Free State, with whom there had not even been any discussion, took a similar step. Her Majesty's dominions were immediately invaded by the two Republics, siege was laid to three towns within the British frontier, a large portion of the two Colonies was overrun, with great destruction to property and life, and the Republics claimed to treat the inhabitants of extensive portions of her Majesty's dominions as if those dominions had been annexed to one or other of them. In anticipation of these operations the South African Republic had been accumulating for many years past military stores on an enormous scale, which, by their character, could only have been intended for use against Great Britain.

Your Honours make some observations of a negative character upon the object with which these preparations were made. I do not think it necessary to discuss the questions you have raised. But the result of these preparations, carried on with great secrecy, has been that the British Empire has been compelled to confront an invasion which has entailed upon the Empire a costly war and the loss of thousands of precious lives. This great calamity has been the penalty which Great Britain has suffered for having in recent years acquiesced in the existence of the two Republics.

In view of the use to which the two Republics have put the position which was given to them, and the calamities which their unprovoked attack has inflicted upon her Majesty's dominions, her Majesty's Government can only answer your Honours' telegram by saying that they are not prepared to assent to the independence either of the South African Republic or of the Orange Free State.

Stop

APPENDIX H

THE TWO CONVENTIONS

CONVENTION OF 1881.

HER Majesty's Commissioners for the settlement of the Transvaal Territory duly appointed as such by a Commission passed under the Royal Sign Manual and Signet bearing date the 5th of April, 1881, do hereby undertake and guarantee on behalf of Her Majesty that from and after the 8th day of August, 1881, complete self-government, subject to the suzerainty of Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, will be accorded to the inhabitants of the Transvaal Territory, upon the following terms and conditions, and subject to the following reservations and limitations :—

ARTICLE 1.—The said Territory, to be hereinafter called the Transvaal State, will embrace the land lying between the following boundaries, to wit.

(*Here follows a long description of landmarks, boundaries, &c.*)

ARTICLE 2.—Her Majesty reserves to herself, her heirs and successors (*a*) the right from time to time to appoint a British Resident in and for the said State, with such duties and functions as are hereinafter defined; (*b*) the right to move troops through the said State in time of war, or in case of the apprehension of immediate war between the Suzerain Power and any foreign State or native tribe in South Africa; and (*c*) the control of the external relations of the said State, including the conclusion of treaties and the conduct of diplomatic intercourse with foreign Powers, such intercourse to be carried on through Her Majesty's diplomatic and consular officers abroad.

ARTICLE 3.—Until altered by the Volksraad, or other competent authority, all laws, whether passed before or after the annexation of the Transvaal to Her Majesty's dominions, shall, except in so far as they are inconsistent with or repugnant to the provisions of this Convention, be and remain in force in the said State in so far as they shall be applicable thereto: Provided that no further enactment specially affecting the interests of natives shall have any force or effect in the said State without the consent of Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, first had and obtained and signified to the Government of the said State through the British Resident. Provided further that in no case will the repeal or amendment of any laws which have been enacted since the administration have a retrospective effect so as to invalidate any acts done or liabilities incurred by virtue of such laws.

ARTICLE 4.—On the 8th day of August, 1881, the Government of the said State, together with all rights and obligations thereto appertaining, and all the State property taken over at the time of annexation, save and except munitions of war, will be handed over to

Messrs. Stephanus Johannes Paulus Krüger,
Martinus Wessel Pretorius, and
Petrus Jacobus Joubert,

or the survivor or survivors of them, who will forthwith cause a Volksraad to be elected and convened, and the Volksraad thus elected and convened will decide as to the further administration of the Government of the said State.

ARTICLE 5.—All sentences passed upon persons who may be convicted of offences contrary to the rules of civilised warfare, committed during the recent hostilities, will be duly carried out, and no alteration or mitigation of such sentences will be made or allowed by the Government of the Transvaal State without Her Majesty's consent, conveyed through the British Resident. In case there shall be any prisoners in any of the gaols of the Transvaal State whose respective sentences of imprisonment have been remitted in part by Her Majesty's administrator or other officer administering the Government, such remission will

be recognised, and acted upon by the future Government of the said State.

ARTICLE 6.—Her Majesty's Government will make due compensation for all losses or damage sustained by reason of such acts as are in the Eighth Article hereinafter specified which may have been committed by Her Majesty's forces during the recent hostilities, except for such losses or damage as may already have been compensated for, and the Government of the Transvaal State will make due compensation for all loss or damage sustained by reason of such acts as are in the Eighth Article hereinafter specified which may have been committed by the people who were in arms against Her Majesty during the recent hostilities, except for such losses or damage as may already have been compensated for.

ARTICLE 7.—The decision of all claims for compensation, as in the last preceding article mentioned, will be referred to a Sub-Commission consisting of the Honourable George Hudson, the Honourable Jacobus Petrus de Wet, and the Honourable John Gilbert Kotze.

In case one or more of such Sub-Commissioners shall be unable or unwilling to act the remaining Sub-Commissioner or Sub-Commissioners will, after consultation with the Government of the Transvaal State, submit for the approval of Her Majesty's High Commissioner the names of one or more persons to be appointed by him to fill the place or places thus vacated.

The decision of the said Sub-Commissioner or a majority of them will be final.

The said Sub-Commissioners will enter upon and perform their duties with all convenient speed. They will before taking evidence or ordering evidence to be taken in respect of any claim decide whether any such claim can be entertained at all under the rules contained in the next succeeding article. In regard to claims which can be so entertained the Sub-Commissioners will in the first instance afford every facility for an amicable arrangement as to the amount payable in respect to any claim, and only in cases in which there is no reasonable ground for believing that an immediate amicable arrangement can be arrived at will they take evidence or order evidence to be taken.

For the purpose of taking evidence and reporting thereon the

Sub-Commissioners may appoint deputies who will without delay submit records of the evidence and their reports to the Sub-Commissioners. The Sub-Commissioners will arrange their sittings and the sittings of their deputies in such a manner as to afford the greatest convenience to the parties concerned and their witnesses. In no case will costs be allowed to either side other than the actual and reasonable expenses of witnesses whose evidence is certified by the Sub-Commissioners to have been necessary. Interest will not run on the amount of any claim except as hereinafter provided for.

The said Sub-Commissioners will forthwith after deciding upon any claim announce their decision to the Government against which the award is made and to the claimant.

The amount of remuneration payable to the Sub-Commissioners and their deputies will be determined by the High Commissioner after all the claims have been decided upon. The British Government and the Government of the Transvaal State will pay proportionate shares of such remuneration and of the expenses of the Sub-Commissioners and their deputies according to the amounts awarded against them respectively.

ARTICLE 8.—For the purpose of distinguishing claims to be accepted from those to be rejected the Sub-Commissioners will be guided by the following rules, viz.: Compensation will be allowed for losses or damage sustained by reason of the following acts committed during the recent hostilities, viz.: (*a*) Commandeering, seizure, confiscation, or destruction of property or damage done to property; (*b*) violence done or threats used by persons in arms.

In regard to acts under (*a*) compensation will be allowed for direct losses only.

In regard to acts falling under (*b*) compensation will be allowed for actual losses of property or actual injury to the same, proved to have been caused by its enforced abandonment.

No claims for indirect losses, except such as are in this article specially provided for, will be entertained.

No claims which have been handed in to the secretary of the Royal Commission after the first day of July, 1881, will be entertained unless the Sub-Commissioner shall be satisfied that the delay was reasonable.

When claims for loss of property are considered the Sub-Commissioners will require distinct proof of the existence of the property and that it neither has reverted nor will revert to the claimant.

ARTICLE 9.—The Government of the Transvaal State will pay and satisfy the amount of every claim awarded against it within one month after the Sub-Commissioners shall have notified their decision to the said Government, and in default of such payment the said Government will pay interest at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum from the date of such default; but Her Majesty's Government may at any time before such payment pay the amount with interest, if any, to the claimant in satisfaction of his claim, and may add the sum thus paid to any debt which may be due by the Transvaal State to Her Majesty's Government as hereinafter provided for.

ARTICLE 10.—The Transvaal State will be liable for the balance of the debts for which the South African Republic was liable at the date of annexation, to wit: the sum of £48,000 in respect of the Cape Commercial Bank Loan and £85,667 in respect of the railway loan, together with the amount due on the 8th of August, 1881, on account of the Orphan Chamber debt, which now stands at £27,226 15s., which debts will be a first charge upon the revenues of the State. The Transvaal State will, moreover, be liable for the lawful expenditure lawfully incurred for the necessary expenses of the province since annexation, to wit: the sum of £265,000, which debt, together with such debts as may be incurred by virtue of the Ninth Article will be a second charge upon the revenues of the State.

ARTICLE 11.—The debts due as aforesaid by the Transvaal State to Her Majesty's Government will bear interest at the rate of 3½ per cent.; and any portion of such debt as may remain unpaid on the 8th of August, 1882, shall be repayable by a payment for interest and sinking fund of £6 os. 9d. per £100 per annum, which will extinguish the debt in twenty-five years. The said payment of £6 os. 9d. per £100 shall be payable half-yearly in British currency on the 8th of February and the 8th of August in each year. Provided always that the Transvaal State shall pay in reduction of the said debt the sum of £100,000 before the 8th of August, 1882, and shall be at liberty at the close

of any half-year to pay off the whole or any portion of the outstanding debt.

ARTICLE 12.—All persons holding property in the said State on the 8th day of August, 1881, will continue to enjoy the rights of property which they have enjoyed since the annexation. No person who has remained loyal to Her Majesty during the recent hostilities shall suffer any molestation by reason of his loyalty or be liable to any criminal prosecution or civil action for any part taken in connection with such hostilities, and all such persons will have full liberty to reside in the country with enjoyment of all civil rights and protection for their persons and property.

ARTICLE 13.—Natives will be allowed to acquire land, but the grant or transfer of such land will in every case be made to and registered in the name of the Native Location Commission hereinafter mentioned in trust for such natives.

ARTICLE 14.—Natives will be allowed to move as freely within the country as may be consistent with the requirements of public order, and to leave it for the purpose of seeking employment elsewhere or for other lawful purposes, subject always to the Pass Laws of the said State, as amended by the Legislature of the province, or as may hereafter be enacted under the provisions of the Third Article of this Convention.

ARTICLE 15.—The provisions of the Fourth Article of the Sand River Convention are hereby reaffirmed, and no slavery or apprenticeship partaking of slavery will be tolerated by the Government of the said State.

ARTICLE 16.—There will continue to be complete freedom of religion and protection from molestation for all denominations, provided the same be not inconsistent with morality and good order; and no disability shall attach to any person in regard to rights of property by reason of the religious opinions which he holds.

ARTICLE 17.—The British Resident will receive from the Government of the Transvaal State such assistance and support as can by law be given for the due discharge of his functions. He will also receive every assistance for the proper care and preservation of the graves of such of Her Majesty's forces as have died in the Transvaal, and if need be, for the expropriation of land for the purpose.

ARTICLE 18.—The following will be the duties and functions of the British Resident :—

1. He will perform duties and functions analogous to those discharged by a *Chargé d'Affaires* and Consul-General.

2. In regard to the natives within the Transvaal State he will (*a*) report to the High Commissioner, as representative of the Suzerain, as to the working and observance of the provisions of this Convention ; (*b*) report to the Transvaal authorities any cases of ill-treatment of natives, or attempts to incite natives to rebellion, that may come to his knowledge ; (*c*) use his influence with the natives in favour of law and order ; and (*d*) generally perform such other duties as are by this Convention entrusted to him, and take such steps for the protection of persons and property of natives as are consistent with the law of the land.

3. In regard to natives not residing in the Transvaal (*a*) he will report to the High Commissioner and the Transvaal Government any encroachments reported to him as having been made by Transvaal residents upon the land of any such natives, and in case of disagreement between the Transvaal Government and the British Resident as to whether an encroachment has been made, the decision of the Suzerain will be final ; (*b*) the British Resident will be the medium of communication with native chiefs outside the Transvaal, and, subject to the approval of the High Commissioner as representing the Suzerain, he will control the conclusion of treaties with them ; and (*c*) he will arbitrate upon every dispute between the Transvaal residents and natives outside the Transvaal (as to acts committed beyond the boundaries of the Transvaal) which may be referred to him by the parties interested.

4. In regard to communication with foreign Powers the Transvaal Government will correspond with Her Majesty's Government through the British Resident and the High Commissioner.

ARTICLE 19.—The Government of the Transvaal State will strictly adhere to the boundaries defined in the first article of this Convention, and will do its utmost to prevent any of its inhabitants from making any encroachment upon lands beyond the said State. The Royal Commission will forthwith appoint a person who will beacon off the boundary line between Ramat-

Iabama and the point where such line first touches the Griqualand West boundary, midway between the Vaal and Hart Rivers. The person so appointed will be instructed to make an arrangement between the owners of the farms "Grootfontein" and "Valleifontein," on the one hand, and the Barolong authorities on the other, by which a fair share of the water supply of the said farms shall be allowed to flow undisturbed to the said Barolongs.

ARTICLE 20.—All grants or titles issued at any time by the Transvaal Government in respect of land outside the boundary of the Transvaal State, as defined in Article 1, shall be considered invalid and of no effect except in so far as any such grant or title relates to land that falls within the boundary of the Transvaal State; and all persons holding any such grant so considered invalid and of no effect, will receive from the Government of the Transvaal State such compensation either in land or in money as the Volksraad shall determine. In all cases in which any native chiefs or other authorities outside the said boundaries have received any adequate consideration from the Government of the former South African Republic, for land excluded from the Transvaal by the first article of this Convention, or where permanent improvements have been made on the land, the British Resident will, subject to the approval of the High Commissioner, use his influence to recover from the native authorities fair compensation for the loss of the land thus excluded or of the permanent improvements thereon.

ARTICLE 21.—Forthwith after the taking effect of this Convention, a Native Location Commission will be constituted, consisting of the President (or in his absence the Vice-President) of the State, or some one deputed by him, the Resident, or some one deputed by him, and a third person to be agreed upon by the President (or Vice-President as the case may be) and the Resident; and such Commission will be a standing body for the performance of the duties hereinafter mentioned.

ARTICLE 22.—The Native Location Commission will reserve to the native tribes of the State such locations as they may be fairly and equitably entitled to, due regard being had to the actual occupation of such tribes. The Native Location Com-

mission will clearly define the boundaries of such locations, and for that purpose will in every instance first of all ascertain the wishes of the parties interested in such land. In case land already granted in individual titles shall be required for the purpose of any location the owners will receive such compensation either in other land or in money as the Volksraad shall determine. After the boundaries of any location have been fixed, no fresh grant of land within such location will be made nor will the boundaries be altered without the consent of the Location Commission. No fresh grants of land will be made in the districts of Waterberg, Zoutpansberg, and Lydenburg until the locations in the said districts respectively shall have been defined by the said Commission.

ARTICLE 23.—If not released before the taking effect of this Convention, Sikukuni and those of his followers who have been imprisoned with him will be forthwith released, and the boundaries of his location will be defined by the Native Location Commission in the same manner indicated in the last preceding article.

ARTICLE 24.—The independence of the Swazis within the boundary line of Swaziland as indicated in the first article of this Convention will be fully recognised.

ARTICLE 25.—No other or higher duties will be imposed on the importation into the Transvaal State of any article the produce or manufacture of the dominions and possessions of Her Majesty, from whatever place arriving, than are or may be payable on the like article, the produce or manufacture of any other country, nor will any prohibition be maintained or imposed on the importation of any article the produce or manufacture of the dominions and possessions of Her Majesty which shall not equally extend to the importation of the like articles being the produce or manufacture of any other country.

ARTICLE 26.—All persons, other than natives, conforming to the laws of the Transvaal State, (*a*) will have full liberty, with their families, to enter, travel, or reside in any part of the Transvaal State; (*b*) they will be entitled to hire or possess houses, manufactories, warehouses, shops, and premises; (*c*) they may carry on their commerce either in person or by any agents whom they may think fit to employ; (*d*) they will not be subject

in respect to their persons or property, or in respect of their commerce or industry, to any taxes whether general or local other than those which are or may be imposed on Transvaal citizens.

ARTICLE 27.—All inhabitants of the Transvaal shall have free access to the Courts of Justice for the prosecution and defence of their rights.

ARTICLE 28.—All persons, other than natives, who established their domicile in the Transvaal between the 12th day of April, 1877, and the date when this Convention comes into effect, and who shall within twelve months after such last-mentioned date have their names registered by the British Resident, shall be exempt from all compulsory military service whatever. The Resident shall notify such registration to the Government of the Transvaal State.

ARTICLE 29.—Provision shall hereafter be made by a separate instrument for the mutual extradition of criminals, and also for the surrender of deserters from Her Majesty's forces.

ARTICLE 30.—All debts contracted since the annexation will be payable in the same currency in which they may have been contracted. All uncancelled postage and other revenue stamps issued by the Government since the annexation will remain valid, and will be accepted at their present value by the future Government of the State. All licenses duly issued since the annexation will remain in force for the period for which they may have been issued.

ARTICLE 31.—No grants of land which may have been made, and no transfers or mortgages which may have been passed since the day of annexation, will be invalidated by reason merely of their having been made or passed after such date. All transfers to the British Secretary for Native Affairs, in trust for natives will remain in force, the Native Location Commission taking the place of such Secretary for Native Affairs.

ARTICLE 32.—This Convention will be ratified by a newly elected Volksraad within the period of three months after its execution, and in default of such ratification this Convention shall be null and void.

ARTICLE 33.—Forthwith after the ratification of this Convention, as in the last preceding article mentioned, all British troops

in Transvaal territory will leave the same, and the mutual delivery of munitions of war will be carried out.

Signed at Pretoria this third day of August, 1881,

Royal Commissioners
HERCULES ROBINSON, *President and High Commissioner.*
EVELYN WOOD, *Major-General, Officer Administering the Government.*
J. H. DE VILLIERS.

We, the undersigned, Stephanus Johannes Paulus Krüger, Martinus Wessel Pretorius, and Petrus Jacobus Joubert, as representatives of the Transvaal burghers, do hereby agree to all the above conditions, reservations, and limitations under which self-government has been restored to the inhabitants of the Transvaal territory, subject to the suzerainty of Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, and we agree to accept the Government of the said territory, with all the rights and obligations thereto appertaining on the 8th day of August, 1881, and we promise and undertake that this Convention shall be ratified by a newly elected Volksraad of the Transvaal State within three months from this date.

Signed at Pretoria this 3rd day of August, 1881,

S. J. P. KRÜGER.
M. W. PRETORIUS.
P. J. JOUBERT.

CONVENTION OF 1884.

Whereas the Government of the Transvaal State, through its Delegates, consisting of Stephanus Johannes Paulus Krüger, President of the said State, Stephanus Jacobus Du Toit, Superintendent of Education, and Nicholas Jacobus Smit, a member of the Volksraad, have represented that the Convention signed at Pretoria on the 3rd day of August, 1881, and ratified by the Volksraad of the said State on the 25th October, 1881, contains certain provisions which are inconvenient, and imposes burdens and obligations from which the said State is desirous to be relieved, and that the south-western boundaries fixed by the said Convention should be amended, with a view to promote the peace

and good order of the said State, and of the countries adjacent thereto; and whereas Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, has been pleased to take the said representations into consideration: Now, therefore, Her Majesty has been pleased to direct, and it is hereby declared, that the following articles of a new Convention, signed on behalf of Her Majesty by Her Majesty's High Commissioner in South Africa, the Right Honourable Sir Hercules George Robert Robinson, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, and on behalf of the Transvaal State (which shall hereinafter be called the South African Republic) by the above-named Delegates, Stephanus Johannes Paulus Krüger, Stephanus Jacobus Du Toit, and Nicholas Jacobus Smit, shall, when ratified by the Volksraad of the South African Republic, be substituted for the articles embodied in the Convention of 3rd August, 1881; which latter, pending such ratification, shall continue in full force and effect.

ARTICLE 2.—The Government of the South African Republic will strictly adhere to the boundaries defined in the first Article of this Convention, and will do its utmost to prevent any of its inhabitants from making any encroachments upon lands beyond the said boundaries. The Government of the South African Republic will appoint Commissioners upon the eastern and western borders whose duty it will be strictly to guard against irregularities and all trespassing over the boundaries. Her Majesty's Government will, if necessary, appoint Commissioners in the native territories outside the eastern and western borders of the South African Republic to maintain order and prevent encroachment.

Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the South African Republic will each appoint a person to proceed together to beacon off the amended south-west boundary as described in Article 1 of this Convention; and the President of the Orange Free State shall be requested to appoint a referee to whom the said persons shall refer any questions on which they may disagree respecting the interpretation of the said Article, and the decision of such referee thereon shall be final. The arrangement already made, under the terms of Article 19 of the Convention of Pretoria

of the 3rd August, 1881, between the owners of the farms Grootfontein and Valleifontein on the one hand, and the Barolong authorities on the other, by which a fair share of the water supply of the said farms shall be allowed to flow undisturbed to the said Barolongs, shall continue in force.

ARTICLE 3.—If a British officer is appointed to reside at Pretoria or elsewhere within the South African Republic to discharge functions analogous to those of a Consular officer he will receive the protection and assistance of the Republic.

ARTICLE 4.—The South African Republic will conclude no treaty or engagement with any State or nation other than the Orange Free State, nor with any native tribe to the eastward or westward of the Republic, until the same has been approved by Her Majesty the Queen.

Such approval shall be considered to have been granted if Her Majesty's Government shall not, within six months after receiving a copy of such treaty (which shall be delivered to them immediately upon its completion), have notified that the conclusion of such treaty is in conflict with the interests of Great Britain or of any of Her Majesty's possessions in South Africa.

ARTICLE 5.—The South African Republic will be liable for any balance which may still remain due of the debts for which it was liable at the date of annexation, to wit the Cape Commercial Bank Loan, the Railway Loan, and the Orphan Chamber Debt, which debts will be a first charge upon the revenues of the Republic. The South African Republic will, moreover, be liable to Her Majesty's Government for £250,000, which will be a second charge upon the revenues of the Republic.

ARTICLE 6.—The debt due as aforesaid by the South African Republic to Her Majesty's Government will bear interest at the rate of 3½ per cent., from the date of the ratification of this Convention, and shall be repayable by a payment for interest and Sinking Fund of £6 os. 9d. per £100 per annum, which will extinguish the debt in twenty-five years. The said payment of £6 os. 9d. per £100 shall be payable half-yearly, in British currency, at the close of each half-year from the date of such ratification: Provided always that the South African Republic shall be at liberty at the close of any half-year to pay off the whole or any portion of the outstanding debt.

Interest at the rate of 3½ per cent. on the debt standing under the Convention of Pretoria shall as heretofore be paid to the date of the ratification of this Convention.

ARTICLE 7.—All persons who held property in the Transvaal on the 8th day of August, 1881, and still hold the same, will continue to enjoy the rights of property which they have enjoyed since the 12th April, 1877. No person who has remained loyal to Her Majesty during the late hostilities shall suffer any molestation by reason of his loyalty; or be liable to any criminal prosecution or civil action for any part taken in connection with such hostilities; and all such persons will have full liberty to reside in the country, with enjoyment of all civil rights, and protection for their persons and property.

ARTICLE 8.—The South African Republic renews the declaration made in the Sand River Convention, and in the Convention of Pretoria, that no slavery or apprenticeship partaking of slavery will be tolerated by the Government of the said Republic.

ARTICLE 9.—There will continue to be complete freedom of religion and protection from molestation for all denominations, provided the same be not inconsistent with morality and good order; and no disability shall attach to any person in regard to rights of property by reason of the religious opinions which he holds.

ARTICLE 10.—The British Officer appointed to reside in the South African Republic will receive every assistance from the Government of the said Republic in making due provision for the proper care and preservation of the graves of such of Her Majesty's Forces as have died in the Transvaal; and, if need be, for the appropriation of land for the purpose.

ARTICLE 11.—All grants or titles issued at any time by the Transvaal Government in respect of land outside the boundary of the South African Republic, as defined in Article 1, shall be considered invalid and of no effect, except in so far as any such grant or title relates to land that falls within the boundary of the South African Republic; and all persons holding any such grant so considered invalid and of no effect will receive from the Government of the South African Republic such compensation, either in land or in money, as the Volksraad shall determine. In all cases in which any Native Chiefs or other authorities outside the

said boundaries have received any adequate consideration from the Government of the South African Republic for land excluded from the Transvaal by the first article of this Convention, or where permanent improvements have been made on the land, the High Commissioner will recover from the native authorities fair compensation for the loss of the land thus excluded, or of the permanent improvements thereon.

ARTICLE 12.—The independence of the Swazis, within the boundary line of Swaziland, as indicated in the first Article of this Convention, will be fully recognised.

ARTICLE 13.—Except in pursuance of any treaty or engagement made as provided in Article 4 of this Convention, no other or higher duties shall be imposed on the importation into the South African Republic of any article coming from any part of Her Majesty's dominions than are or may be imposed on the like article coming from any other place or country; nor will any prohibition be maintained or imposed on the importation into the South African Republic of any article coming from any part of Her Majesty's dominions which shall not equally extend to the like article coming from any other place or country. And in like manner the same treatment shall be given to any article coming to Great Britain from the South African Republic as to the like article coming from any other place or country.

These provisions do not preclude the consideration of special arrangements as to import duties and commercial relations between the South African Republic and any of Her Majesty's colonies or possessions.

ARTICLE 14.—All persons, other than natives, conforming themselves to the laws of the South African Republic (*a*) will have full liberty, with their families, to enter, travel, or reside in any part of the South African Republic; (*b*) they will be entitled to hire or possess houses, manufactories, warehouses, shops, and premises; (*c*) they may carry on their commerce either in person or by any agents whom they may think fit to employ; (*d*) they will not be subject, in respect of their persons or property, or in respect of their commerce or industry, to any taxes, whether general or local, other than those which are or may be imposed upon citizens of the said Republic.

ARTICLE 15.—All persons, other than natives, who established

their domicile in the Transvaal between the 12th day of April, 1877, and the 8th August, 1881, and who within twelve months after such last-mentioned date have had their names registered by the British Resident, shall be exempt from all compulsory military service whatever.

ARTICLE 16.—Provision shall hereafter be made by a separate instrument for the mutual extradition of criminals, and also for the surrender of deserters from Her Majesty's Forces.

ARTICLE 17.—All debts contracted between the 12th April, 1877, and the 8th August, 1881, will be payable in the same currency in which they may have been contracted.

ARTICLE 18.—No grants of land which may have been made, and no transfers or mortgages which may have been passed between the 12th April, 1877, and the 8th August, 1881, will be invalidated by reason merely of their having been made or passed between such dates.

All transfers to the British Secretary for Native Affairs in trust for natives will remain in force, an officer of the South African Republic taking the place of such Secretary for the Native Affairs.

ARTICLE 19.—The Government of the South African Republic will engage faithfully to fulfil the assurances given, in accordance with the laws of the South African Republic, to the natives at the Pretoria Pitso by the Royal Commission in the presence of the Triumvirate, and with their entire assent (1) as to the freedom of the natives to buy or otherwise acquire land under certain conditions; (2) as to the appointment of a commission to mark out native locations; (3) as to the access of the natives to the courts of law; and (4) as to their being allowed to move freely within the country, or to leave it for any legal purpose, under a pass system.

ARTICLE 20.—This Convention will be ratified by a Volksraad of the South African Republic within the period of six months after its execution, and in default of such ratification this Convention shall be null and void,

Signed in duplicate in London this 27th day of February, 1884.

(Signed) HERCULES ROBINSON.
(Signed) S. J. P. KRÜGER.
(Signed) S. J. DU TOIT.
(Signed) M. J. SMIT.

APPENDIX I

LORD METHUEN'S REPORT ON THE BATTLE OF MAAGHERSFONTEIN

THE following summary of Lord Methuen's despatch, from the pages of the *Daily Telegraph* of March 17th, should be read in connection with the Chapter on the Battle of Maaghersfontein :—

In a despatch dated February 15th, Lord Methuen describes the action of Maaghersfontein, or Majesfontein. He explains that the enemy had entrenched a very strong position running north-west, and including a three-mile long kopje on the north.

"So long as this kopje, named Majesfontein, remained in possession of the enemy, I did not feel justified with my small force in marching up the Modder River, for my line of communication would have been in danger, and my transport could only carry five days' provisions. Had I marched round by Jacobsdal to Brown's Drift, I should have had to fight my way across the river in the face of a mobile force consisting of 16,000 men."

Lord Methuen hoped to crush the enemy at one blow by attacking the Maaghersfontein Kopje, and for two hours on December 10th the kopje was bombarded with all the guns, including the naval 4·7 inch. The General describes in detail his anticipation that great destruction would be done, especially by lyddite, and ordered the Highland Brigade, supported by all the guns, and with their right and rear protected by the Guards Brigade, to assault the southern end of the kopje, consisting of a high hill, after midnight the following morning. The first misfortune was the accidental discharge of two rifles and the flashes from a lantern. "which gave the enemy pretty timely notice of the march." General Wauchope arranged all the details of the advance, "The brigade was to march in mass of quarter columns, the four battalions keeping touch, and if necessary ropes were to be used for the left guides; these ropes were taken, but I believe," adds

Lord Methuen, "used by only two battalions. The three battalions were to extend just before daybreak, two companies in firing line, two companies in support, and four companies in reserve, all at five paces interval between them." Lord Methuen then gives[5] an account of what actually happened—a tale infinitely sad.

Not finding any signs of the enemy on the right flank just before daybreak, which took place at 4 a.m., as the brigade was approaching the foot of the kopje, Major-General Wauchope gave the order for the Black Watch to extend, but to direct its advance on the spur in front, the Seaforth Highlanders to prolong to the left, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders to prolong to the right, the Highland Light Infantry in reserve. Five minutes earlier (the kopje looming in the distance), Major Benson had asked Major-General Wauchope if he did not consider it to be time to deploy. Lieut.-Colonel Hughes-Hallett states that the extension could have taken place 200 yards sooner, but the leading battalion got thrown into confusion in the dark by a very thick bit of bush about 20 to 30 yards long. The Seaforth Highlanders went round this bush to the right, and had just got into its original position behind the Black Watch when the order to extend was given by Major-General Wauchope to the Black Watch. The Seaforth Highlanders and two companies of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders were also moving out, and were in the act of extending when suddenly a heavy fire was poured in by the enemy, most of the bullets going over the men.

"Lieut.-Colonel Hughes-Hallett at once ordered the Seaforths to fix bayonets and charge the position. The officers commanding the other battalions acted in a similar manner. At this moment some one gave the word 'Retire.' Part of the Black Watch then rushed back through the ranks of the Seaforths. Lieut.-Colonel Hallett ordered his men to halt and lie down, and not to retire. It was now becoming quite light, and some of the Black Watch were a little in front, to the left of the Seaforths."

As soon as light permitted the artillery opened fire. The Seaforths having had no orders, the commanding officer tried to reach the trenches, about 400 yards off, but as soon as the companies moved the officers and half the men fell before a very heavy fire. Ten minutes later another rush was tried, with the same fatal ill-success, and the fragment of the regiment lay down where they were. Meanwhile the 9th and 12th Lancers, G Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, and mounted infantry were working on the

right flank. At twelve o'clock noon the Gordons went forward to support the Highland Brigade by order of Lord Methuen, who adds that "the trenches, even after the bombardment of lyddite and shrapnel since daybreak, were too strongly held to be cleared"; but "the battalion did splendid work throughout the day." Continuing the story from this point Lord Methuen states:

"At 1 p.m. the Seaforth Highlanders found themselves exposed to a heavy crossfire, the enemy trying to get round to the right. The commanding officer brought his left forward. An order to 'Retire' was given, and it was at this time that the greater part of the casualties occurred. The retirement continued for 500 yards, and the 'Highlanders' remained there till dusk. Lieut.-Colonel Downman, commanding Gordons, gave the order to retire, because he found his position untenable, so soon as the Seaforth Highlanders made the turning movement to the right. This was an unfortunate retirement, for Lieut.-Colonel Hughes-Hallett had received instructions from me to remain in position until dusk, and the enemy were at this time quitting the trenches by tens and twenties."

One paragraph is devoted to the gallant leader of the Highland Brigade, and the General sums up the failure:

"Major-General Wauchope told me, when I asked him the question, on the evening of the 10th, that he quite understood his orders, and made no further remark. He died at the head of the brigade, in which his name will always remain honoured and respected. His high military reputation and attainments disarm all criticism. Every soldier in my division deplores the loss of a fine soldier, and a true comrade.

"The attack failed: the inclement weather was against success; the men in the Highland Brigade were ready enough to rally, but the paucity of officers and non-commissioned officers rendered this no easy matter. I attach no blame to this splendid brigade. From noon until dark I held my own opposite to the enemy's entrenchments."

INDEX

AFRIKANDER Bond, the sympathy of with the Transvaal, xlv.
Alexandersfontein, Boers routed and their laager seized at, 313.
Ambulance :
  Fired on by Boers, 185.
  Stretcher-bearers' bravery, 265.
Army Service Corps, organisation of, 126.

BASUTO LAND, the Switzerland of South Africa, x.
Baden-Powell, Colonel, splendid defence of Mafeking by, 322.
Battles :
  Alexandersfontein, at, 313.
  Belmont, at, 158.
  Colenso, of, 116.
  Elandslaagte, of, 106.
  Glencoe, of, 104.
  Graspan, or Enslin, 170.
  Horrors of, to be seen outside the range of fire, 266.
  Kimberley, outside, 321.
  Laing's Nek, xxxii.
  Maaghersfontein, of, 116, 207.
  Majuba Hill, xxxii.
  Nicholson's Nek, liv., 111.
  Pieter's Hill, 329.
Battles (*continued*)—
  Rietfontein, at, 109.
  Scenes and sounds of modern, 261.
  Spion Kop, of, 11.
  Stormberg, 116, 331.
  Traits of modern, 252.
  Waggon Hill, of, 118.
Belmont battle, description of, 160.
Bloemfontein :
  Capital of the Orange Free State, xiii.
  Captured by Andries Pretorius, xxvi.
  Taken by Lord Roberts, 328.
Boers, the :
  Anecdotes about, 241.
  As slave-drivers, xx.
  At home, 78.
  Boastful because of their victories, xxxiv.
  Camps :
    Adjuncts of, 166.
    At the beginning of the war, lii.
  Cannot be compared to the founders of the North American Republic, xxii.
  Character of, xvi.

Boers, the (*continued*)—
Characteristic aims of, xix.
Combination of Dutch and French Huguenots, a, xviii.
Costume worn by when fighting, 168.
Disastrous effect of foreign agencies among, xv.
Double dealing of, 315.
Drive to battle in carriages, 167.
Endeavour of to shake off the British yoke, xxvi.
Establishment of the Republics by, xxiv.
Generals of :
Botha, Commandant, 322.
Cronje, 198, 326.
Joubert, General, 102.
Meyer, Lucas, 102.
Viljoen, 102.
Gin, extensively used by, 193.
"Great Trek" made in 1836 by, xxiii.
Horses of, found on Modder River Battlefield, 195.
Ignorance of, 85.
Independence of, 86.
Inter marriage of, 79
Methods of fighting, 164.
Native territories invaded by, xxxvi.
Open letter to a Field-Cornet by Julian Ralph, 296.
Participants in the "Great Trek," xxv.
Places of danger in the battles forced on subordinates by, 167
Reason of the British defeat at Majuba Hill by, xxxiii.
Republican communities among, xxvi.
Retrogression of, xxxv.
Boers, the (*continued*)—
Revolt of the Transvaal Boers xxxii.
Ride to the Front on inferior horses, leaving their best chargers to retreat with, 167.
Rude graves made by on the battlefield, 193.
Seldom seen in battle, 276.
10,000 of them journey North and East in 1838, xxiii.
Treatment of :
Natives by, xxi.
The Refugees by, 89.
Trenches of, impregnable, 275.
Ultimatum issued by, l.
Wonderful trenches of, 191.
Wretched condition of the fighting, 165.
Brakfontein Range, Movement of Buller on the, 120.
British Army.
In South Africa at the outbreak of the War, lii.
Officers of :
Characteristics of, 71.
Splendid qualities of the, 73.
Using mud to colour their white straps, drums, &c., 154.
British Casualties :
Colenso, at, 117.
Elandslaagte, at, 108.
Glencoe, at, 105.
Graspan, at, 176.
Modder River Battle, at, 188.
Rietfontein, at, 109.
British Generals :
Babbington, General, 309.
Buller, Sir Redvers, liii., 329.
Clery, Sir Francis, liii.
Colville, General, 309.
Dundonald, Lord, 119, 329.

British Generals (*continued*)—
French, General, 106, 326.
Gatacre, Sir William, liii., 114.
Hart, General, 329.
Hildyard, General, 115.
Kelly-Kenny, General, 326.
Kitchener, Lord, 117.
Lyttelton, General, 119.
Macdonald, Sir Hector, 309.
Methuen, Lord, liii., 114.
Pole-Carew, Brigadier-General, 179, 198, 309.
Roberts, Field-Marshal Lord, lvi., 117.
Symons, Sir William Penn, 103.
Walker, Sir Forestier, 70.
Warren, Sir Charles, 118.
Wauchope, General, 212.
White, Sir George, 101.
Wood, Major-General, 131.
Yule, General, 105.
British Government slow to realise the task before it, liii.
British officers :
Baden-Powell, Colonel, 322.
Barter, Colonel, 163, 187, 201.
Bond, Captain, 186.
Carleton, Colonel, 110.
Douglas, Colonel, 309.
Gough, Colonel the Hon. G. H., 134.
Hall, Major, 143.
Hamilton, Colonel, 108.
Keith-Falconer, Lieut.-Colonel, 147.
Kekewich, Colonel, 316.
Lindley, Major, 174.
Macbean, Colonel, 297.
Mackenzie, Captain, 124.
May, Captain, 322.
Mess of the Wessex Fusiliers, 229.
British Officers (*continued*)—
Money, Colonel, 138.
O'Meara, Major W. A. T., 319.
Plumer, Colonel, 331.
Reason why the Boers can single them out, 147.
Rimington, Major, 156.
Scott-Turner, Colonel, 321–23.
The flower of England's aristocracy, 71.
Webster, Lieutenant, 317.
Wood, Captain, 147.
British reply to the Boer Ultimatum, li.
British transports ordered to Durban, 114.
British troops :
Despatched in force after Oct. 31, 1899, liv.
Moved nearer the frontiers of the Free State and Transvaal, lii.
Movements of from Capetown kept secret, 63.
150,000 men sent out, lvi.
Reinforced by calls on the Volunteers and Yeomanry, lv.
Buller, General Sir Redvers :
Army Corps under, liii.
Determination of to relieve Ladysmith, 114, 329.
Successful in relieving Ladysmith, 329.

CAMPS, Boer :
Harrismith, at, lii.
Sandspruit, at, lii.
Volksrust, at, lii.
Cape Colony :
English first spoken in the law courts of, xix.

Cape Colony (*continued*)—
English took possession in 1795 of, xviii.
Population of, xiii.
Size of, xiii.
Capetown :
Contrasts between British soldiers and refugees in, 77.
Free and easy manners in, 60.
Headquarters of the British army, 61.
Idlers and millionaires in, 87.
Millionaires at the hotels of, 91.
Railway station of, excitement at the, 61.
Refugees in, 57.
Relief work for refugees in, 90.
Rich refugees in, mean characteristics of, 75.
Shops of, 60.
Slender variety of food in, 61.
Transfigured by the war, 57.
Variety of nationalities to be found in, 58.
Vehicles of, 59.
Chieveley, destruction of a British armoured train near, 115.
Christmas :
At Kimberley, 324.
Celebrated in Methuen's camp, 248.
Cheering the Queen in camp at, 250.
With Methuen's army, 243.
Climatic changes in South Africa, 94.
Coldstream Guards the first to cross the Modder River, 197.
Colenso, British troops at, 101.
Colesberg, abandonment of by the British, 130.
Colonial contingents furnished by British Colonies, lv.
Convention of 1884, terms of the, xxxvii.
Cronje, Commandant :
Asks for an armistice, 327.
Flies to Paardeberg, 326.
Sent as prisoner to Capetown, 328.
Surrenders on Majuba Day, 328.
Surrounded by Lord Roberts' army, 327.

De Aar :
British headquarters at, 125.
Fortifications of, 131.
In November, 1899, 121.
Manners at headquarters at, 123.
Martial Law proclaimed in, 132.
Natives at, 127.
Perilous position of, 130.
Rapid growth of, 128.
Remount kraal at, 124.
Situation at, 129.
De Beers Company's liberality in provisioning Kimberley, 318.
Diamond mines at Kimberley, xi.
Dundee, Boers march on, 103.
Dundonald, Lord, enters Ladysmith, 329.
Dust and khaki, the effect of, 150.
Dutch in South Africa. The Historical Foreword, ix.

Elandslaagte :
Battle of, 106.
British troops at, 101.
Occupied by Boers, 102.
Emancipation Act passed in England in 1834, xx.

Enslin or Graspan, description of the battle of, 170.

FAILURE of Buller's :
First attempt to relieve Ladysmith, 117.
Second attempt to relieve Ladysmith, 119.
Third attempt to relieve Ladysmith, 120.

FRANCHISE discussed by Kruger and Sir Alfred Milner, xliv.
French, General :
Cavalry move forward under, 311.
First action by, 106.
Move of to join Lord Roberts, 308.
Relief of Kimberley by, 313.
Starts in pursuit of Cronje, 326.
Frere, British camp at, 116.
Fresh appointments by the British Government, 117.
Fusillade kept up by the Boers at Modder River battle, 184.

GATACRE, General, movements of, 330
Glencoe :
Battle of, 104.
British troops at, 101.
Junction occupied by Boers, 102.
Gold :
Discovered at Witwatersrand in 1885, xxxviii.
In the Transvaal, xi.
Gough, Colonel, forces under at Belmont, 142.
Griqualand formed, 1869, xxix.
Guards, The :
Belmont, at, 160.
Modder River, at, 182.

HARBOURS :
Beira, x.
Capetown, x.
Delagoa Bay, x.
Durban, x.
Saldanha Bay, x.
Walfish Bay, x.
Heliographic communication opened with Ladysmith, 118.
Highland Brigade at Maagharsfontein, the :
Charge of, 212.
Losses of, 226.
Their own explanation, 227.
True story of, 221.
Hildyard, General, successful action at Willow Grange by, 115.
Honey Nest Kloof, watering-place at, 177.
Hotel with mud walls on an island in the Modder River, 254.

JACOBSDAL :
Mounted infantry moving to, 312.
Occupied by Lord Roberts, 313.
Stores of food and ammunition seized by the British at, 314.
Jameson Raid, objects of the, xlii.
Johannesburg, a German opinion of, 93.

KAFFIRS, the, generous treatment of by the British, 99.
Karroo Desert, the, description of, 96.

Keith-Falconer, Lieut.-Colonel, death of, 147.
Kekewich, Colonel, forces under his command at Kimberley, 316.
Khaki, the advantages of, 152.
Kimberley :
British force in, liii.
Christmas at, in 1899, 324.
Claims of ownership when diamonds were found at, xxix.
Diamond mines of, xi.
Food prices fixed at, 319.
Gun manufactured at the De Beers' workshop in, 324.
French relieves, 313.
Martial law proclaimed in, 318.
Record of the siege of, 316.
Search-lights at, 321.
Siege of raised, 325.
Sorties from, 321–23.
Kitchener, Lord :
Appointed Chief of the Staff, 117.
Reply of to Cronje's request for an armistice, 327.
Klip Drift, French crosses the Modder at, 312.
Kruger, President :
Correspondence of with Sir Alfred Milner, xlii.
Speech of on England's High Commissioners at the Cape, 66.
Story of after his visit to London, 84.

LADYSMITH :
British troops at, 101.
Invested by the Boers, 109.
Privations of, 330.
Relieved on February 28th, 329.
Ladysmith (*continued*)—
Sir George White at, 105.
Straits of the garrison of, 118.
Letter to a Field-Cornet from Julian Ralph, 296–307.

MAAGHERSFONTEIN :
British forces at, 209.
Description of the battle of, 207.
Macdonald, General Sir Hector, Chief of the Highland Brigade, 309.
Mafeking :
British force in, liii.
The defence of, 332.
Manica Land, beautiful scenery of, xi.
Matjesfontein, description of Mr. J. D. Logan's property at, 98.
Mess, the :
Kitchen of the Yorkshire Light Infantry, description of, 246.
Luncheon to the accompaniment of shells, 257.
Of the Wessex Fusiliers, incidents at, 230.
Methuen's army :
And the halt after Maaghersfontein, 271.
Start for the relief of Kimberley, 115.
Milner, Sir Alfred :
American opinion of, 67.
Correspondence of with Kruger, xlii.
Great capacities of, 69.
Representations made by in 1899 to Kruger, xlv.
Trials of, 64.
Modder River :
Battle, description of, 179.
Battlefield, description of, 190.

Modder River (*continued*)—
Camp, the long wait at, 252.
Modern War Methods, 271.
Mules and horses purchased, 124.

NAAUWPOORT, abandonment of by the British, 130.
Natal.
Boer:
Invasion of on October 12, 1899, 102.
Republic for six years only, a, xxv.
British force in, liii.
Buller's arrival in, 115.
Invaded by the Boers first in 1838, xxiv.
Population of, xiii.
Size of, xiii.
Naval Brigade at Graspan, gallantry of the, 173.
Newcastle occupied by the Boers, 102.
Nicholson's Nek Disaster, responsibility of, claimed by Sir G. White, 112.

ORANGE FREE STATE, The:
Boers of, superior to those of the Transvaal, xxix.
Claimed £90,000 for Kimberley, xxix.
Independence granted to in 1854, xxxiii.
Population of, xiii.
Size of, xiii.
Orange River Camp, headquarters at during a battle, 135.
Ostrich in camp, an, 145.

PADRE HILL, courage of, at Belmont, 238.
Padre Robertson:
In the Boer lines, 238.
Pluck of, 237.
Plumer, Colonel, work done by the column under, 331.
Pole-Carew, Brigadier-General, given the command of the Guards Brigade, 309.
Petitions signed by Uitlanders, xxxix–xl.
Pietermaritzburg:
British troops at, 101.
Established by the Boers, xxv.
Pretorius, Andries, rising under, xxvi.

QUEENSTOWN, Gatacre's force at, 114.

RAMDAM, Roberts' army at, 311.
Refugees from the Transvaal, treatment of by the Boers, 89.
Retief, Pieter, invasion of Natal by, xxiv.
Rhodes, Cecil:
At Kimberley, 318.
To the rescue in the matter of Christmas fare, 325.
Rimington's Scouts, contrasts in, 157.
Rivers in South Africa:
Buffalo, the, 103.
Klip, 110.
Modder, the, 177, 312.
Orange River, the, 129.
Riet, the, 312.
Tugela, the, 102.
Roberts, Field-Marshal Lord:
Army moving forward under, 310.
Bombardment of Cronje's laager by, 327.

Roberts, Lord (*continued*)—
Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, 117.
Cronje and his army surrenders to, 328.
Move of into the Free State, 310.
Supreme command accepted by, lvi.
Takes possession of Bloemfontein, 328.
Visit of to De Aar, 308.
Roberts, Lieutenant the Hon. Frederick, news of his death at Colenso, lvi.
Rouliot, M., President of the Chamber of Mines at Johannesburg, xl.

Sand River Convention of 1852, terms of the, xxvii.
Scenes of modern war, description of, 262.
Sensations when wounded, 268.
Smith, Sir Harry, facts about, xxvi.
Smokeless powder, the effects of, 277.
Soldiers :
Going to the Front from Capetown, 62.
Peculiarities of soldier servants, 244.
South Africa :
Cities of, two only of any size, xii.
Divisions of :
Cape Colony, xii.
Natal, xii.
Orange Free State, xii.
The Transvaal, xii.
Dust of, the, 150.
Dutch settled in 1652 in, xvii.
South Africa (*continued*)—
Elevation of English and Dutch domains, xi.
French Huguenots settled in 1689 in, xvii.
Harbours of, x.
November climate of, 94.
Pasturage of, xi.
Physical geography of, ix., x.
Sameness of scenery in, x.
Sparsely inhabited, xii.
Temperature of, xi.
Stellenbosch, a supply base for the British, 122.
Steyn, President, flees from his capital, 329.
Summary of events since the relief of Kimberley, 326.
Symons, Sir W. Penn, death of, 104.

Talana Hill, Boer position on, 103.
"Tommies" :
Anxious for the officers to dress like themselves, 155.
No depredations on Boer property by the, 312.
Of conspicuous gallantry :
Bennett, Lance-Corporal, 219.
Cassen, Sergeant, 219.
Mawhood, Private, 219.
Water-bottles, the filling of the, 199.
Transvaal, the :
Aliens Expulsion Act in, xl.
Boer :
Home in, 82.
Wars with the natives, xxx.
Established as a semi-independent State in 1881, xxxiii.

Transvaal, the (*continued*)—
Foreign parasites of the Boers spread discontent, xv.
Gold in, xi.
Greater independence gained in 1884 by a new treaty, xxxvi.
Growth of the revenue of, xxxix.
Mistake by the English in the government of, xxxii.
Pasture land of, xiv.
Population of, xiv.
Size of, xiv.
Terms of naturalisation fixed by, xliii.
Treaty made by Gladstone in 1881 with, xxxiii.
War:
Declared against England, October 9, 1899, xlix.
Munitions amassed by, l.
Tugela, the:
Bridges over destroyed by the Boers, 116.
Recrossed by Buller, 118.

UITLANDERS, the:
Grievances of, xxxix.–xli.
National Union formed by in 1892, xli.

VOLUNTEERS:
City of London Imperials raised, lvi., 117.
Colonial, lv., 117.

WALKER, Sir Forestier, facts about, 70.
War correspondents:
Knight, E. F., 162.
Knox, Mr., 184.
Under fire, incidents of, 281–95.
Wright, Captain, 138.
Warren, Sir Charles, division under, 118.
Water:
Scarcity of after Graspan, 205.
The delights of after fighting and marching, 177.
The value of on Methuen's march, 199.
Waterboer declared owner of Kimberley, xxix.
Waterfall Drift, French crosses the Riet River at, 312.
White, Sir George:
Arrival of at Durban in October, 101.
Disposal of his forces by, 102.
Effort of to harass the enemy at Ladysmith, 110.
White people, the scarcity of, except in Natal, ix.
Witwatersrand, gold discovered in 1885 at, xxxviii.

YORKSHIRES at Maaghersfontein, the, 218.
Yule, General, joining hands with Sir George White, 109.

UNWIN BROTHERS, THE GRESHAM PRESS, WOKING AND LONDON.

JUST PUBLISHED. PRICE **6s.**

An Imperial Light Horseman

His Adventures in the War of 1899 and 1900

BY HAROLD BLORE

This timely story of peril and adventure in South Africa, interwoven with real incidents of the War, is from the pen of one born in that country and thoroughly familiar with its people. Vivid touches of local colour give life to his pages, so that readers of this volume will find just what is wanted to complete the word-pictures that abound in recent records of our battles with the Boers as they follow its hero, from his enrolment as an Imperial Horseman to his escape from Prison in Pretoria.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON, LTD., HENRIETTA STREET,
LONDON, W.C.

The Kendals

BY T. EDGAR PEMBERTON

Author of "The Life of Sothern," "John Hare," &c.

Demy 8vo. With Portraits and other Illustrations. Price 16s.

"It leaves an impression like that of a piece in which the Kendals have played—an impression of pleasure, refinement, refreshment, and of the value of cherishing sweet and kindly feeling in art as in life. Few books can do that, and so this work has every prospect of being widely read."—*Scotsman.*

The Life of Edward Fitzgerald

With Incidental Notices of His Most Intimate Friends

BY JOHN GLYDE

With Introduction by EDWARD CLODD

Extra Crown 8vo, buckram, gilt top. With Photogravure Frontispiece from an unpublished Portrait. Price 7s. 6d.

One of the most widely-read books of verse of the century is beyond a doubt "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayam," the masterpiece of one of the greatest Persian poets, made familiar to all lovers of English literature by Mr. Fitzgerald's wonderful adaptation. There have been many attempts at translating Omar into English, but Mr. Fitzgerald stands out beyond all rivals. This memoir gives a glimpse into the life of Fitzgerald himself, and will go far to show a vast number of Fitzgerald's admirers how delightful a man he was. It also gives us letters similar in character to those which appear in that delightful book, "Letters to Fanny Kemble."

(In the Press.)

C. ARTHUR PEARSON, LTD., HENRIETTA STREET, LONDON, W.C.